

Alaska's Empowerment Playbook

A Hands-On Guide for Successful School Improvement

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development



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 - Northwest Arctic Borough School District

Our classrooms, schools, and school districts across the state of Alaska are situated on the customary, unceded traditional lands of Alaska's first peoples. We acknowledge and thank the generations of Alaska Native peoples from across the state for their continued work in taking care of the land and teaching the next generation of young people.



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Part 1: Alaska's Foundation for Empowerment for Successful School Improvement



Alaska's Commitment and Strategic Plan

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) has a strong commitment to continuous improvement, so students receive the highest quality instruction and services to ensure their success in school and beyond (see Figure 1).

DEED focuses its leadership, resources, and assistance towards providing equitable, high-quality educational opportunities and ongoing improvement of student outcomes through support for educators, school leaders, and students.

Figure 1. The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Public Commitments



Alaska's commitment to continuous improvement is infused in DEED's strategic plan: Meeting Alaska's Education Challenge Together. The vision, mission, and positive trajectories provide a common direction for the state, districts, schools, communities, and Tribes. In addition, the prioritized strategies offer options for districts, schools, and families to improve the trajectories.

Figure 2. Meeting Alaska's Education Challenge Together

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

Vision

All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them.

Alaska Statute 14.03.015

Mission

An excellent education for every student every day.



Positive Trajectories

- Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
- Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.
- Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.
- Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.
- Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and Tribes.

Alaska's Foundation for Empowerment for Successful School Improvement

The foundation for Alaska's continuous school improvement process, *Empowerment for Successful School Improvement*, is built on strong principles and a Theory of Action aligned with DEED's strategic plan. Empowerment for Successful School Improvement is founded on four guiding principles:

1. Leadership capacity is important to success.
2. A culture of collaboration within and between schools, school communities, districts, and the State is needed for sustainable success.
3. School improvement is not done *to* a school, it is a process that *empowers* each school to change adult mindset and practices that lead to improved student learning.
4. Preventative actions and support are critical for school success.

Continuous school improvement calls for a systems approach in which school leaders and faculty closely examine how a particular practice is being enacted, consider how to improve it, and work together to reach a higher level of routine implementation.

Colleagues working together to examine and improve professional practice is *practice-focused collaboration*. The intent is not just to improve implementation of a given practice, but to begin to socialize a collegial, productive, and nonthreatening process of examining and continuously improving practice so that this process becomes a norm at the school. Practice-focused collaboration is the underlying method for reaching a consistently high level of professional practice, the result being greater learning outcomes for the school's students. That means everyone in the school community helping each other perform their roles with greater skill.

As noted by Layland and Corbett (2017),

“the process of improvement is not for the faint of heart. Needs and weaknesses can be readily identified but selecting effective practices to address the needs is more difficult. The real tough work is the implementation of practices and knowing if those practices are indeed changing adult behaviors and practices, many of which are deeply rooted. Effective practices have little chance of being implemented without significant supports. The State Education Agency (SEA), the Local Education Agency (LEA) or Tribal Education Agency (TEA), and school each plays a role in providing supports for a school to improve, and in doing so, each level engages in its own improvement process and elevates the performance of the system as a whole. School improvement is not possible without embedding it within a broader system of support.” (p. 4)

DEED's Theory of Action for Empowerment for Successful School Improvement links the district and school together in building an effective system of improvement, recognition, and supports.

Theory of Action

IF DEED implements a process to engage districts and schools in continuous improvement, provides differentiated assistance to build local capacity for improvement, and intervenes to correct persistent low performance,

THEN districts and schools will be empowered to implement bold decisions necessary to drive needed change for improvement,

AND schools will have the sustained conditions necessary to impact and improve measurable student outcomes fully and effectively.

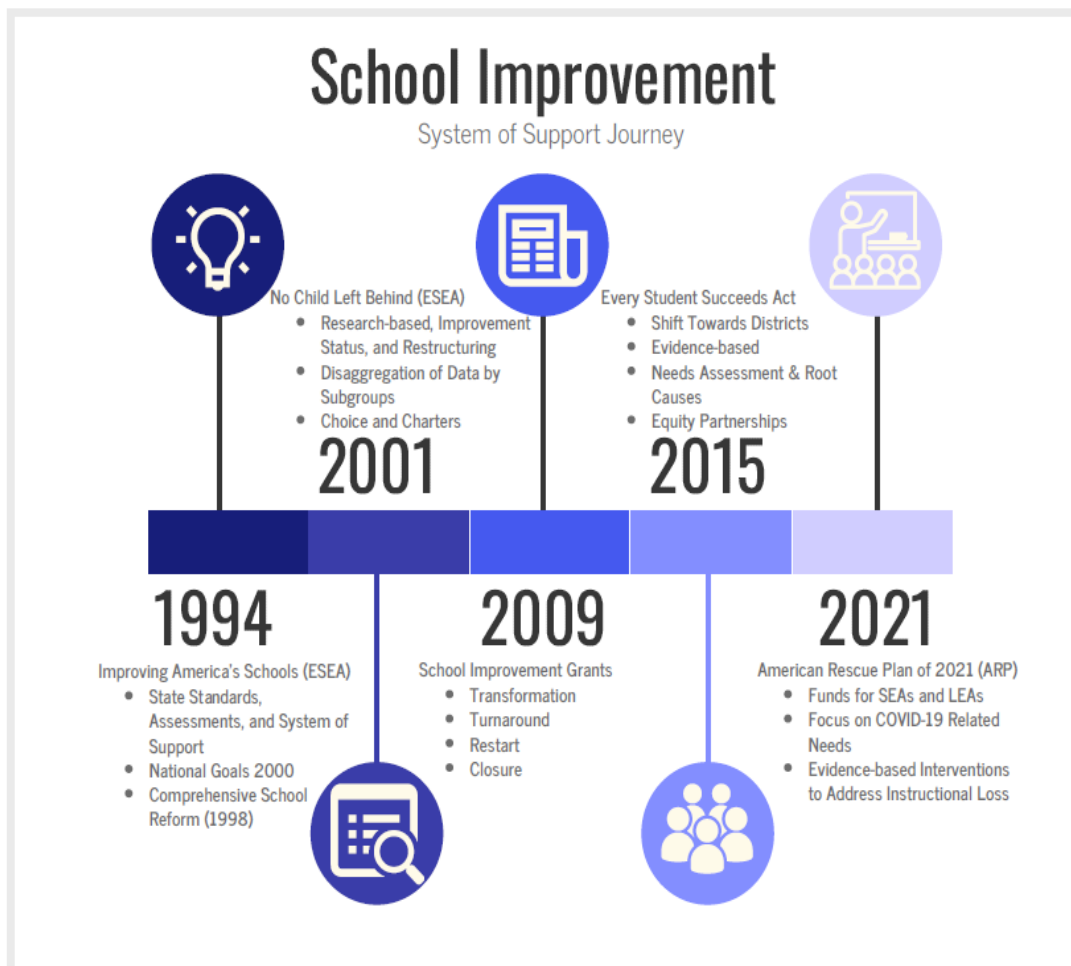
Every Student Succeeds Act

President Lyndon B. Johnson believed in providing full educational opportunities to each and every student. In 1965, President Johnson created the U.S. Department of Education and signed into legislation the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Throughout its fifty-plus years, the overall mission of ESEA has remained the same: to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students. The need for systems of support to continuously improve low performing schools has been an important part of ESEA since 1994 (see Figure 3). ESEA was reauthorized in December 2015 as the Every Student

Succeeds Act (ESSA) and shifted support and accountability from the state to districts with an emphasis on building capacity of districts to support struggling schools. Schools in need of support are defined by ESSA as

- **Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI):** Schools that are in the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools for all students or have a graduation rate of 67 percent or lower.
- **Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI):** Schools that are “consistently underperforming” for any group of students, as defined by the state.
- **Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI):** Schools with any identified subgroup of students performing at or below the performance of identified CSI all students group (bottom 5% of all students group).

Figure 3. System of Support through Federal Legislation



ESSA also defines the role of the State Education Agency (SEA), the Local Education Agency (LEA), and schools in addressing low performance (see Table 1). ESSA maintains a sharp focus on equity by providing flexibilities to leverage resources to close opportunity gaps and improve learning outcomes for all students. The goal of equity in education is

that **each student**—despite family income, race, ethnicity, gender, language, or disability—**accesses** an appropriate, high-quality K–12 education to meet the rigorous standards necessary for post-secondary success. This same focus is present in Alaska’s Education Challenge.

Table 1. School Improvement Roles and Responsibilities as defined by ESSA

School Designation	SEA Role	LEA Role	School Role
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify districts and schools for support & improvement • Allocate state and some federal funding • Use data to uncover resource inequities between districts • Approve improvement plans, provide clear benchmarks, and monitor progress • Provide resources and technical assistance to guide local leaders’ decision-making • Take escalated action if a district does not meet the threshold for improvement (exit criteria) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate local, state, and some federal funding to schools • Use data to uncover resource inequities between schools • In collaboration with schools and communities, develop and submit school improvement plans • Support schools in implementing improvement plans and monitoring progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with the district and community, develop an evidence-based school improvement plan • Implement the improvement plan with support from the district and community
Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate state & some federal funding • Provide resources and technical assistance to guide local leaders’ decision-making • May take action in districts with many TSI schools • Reclassify ATSI schools that do not meet exit criteria as CSI schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate local, state, and some federal funding to schools • Approve improvement plans, provide clear benchmarks, and monitor progress • Take additional action if a school does not meet the district-determined threshold for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with the community, develop and implement an evidence-based improvement plan, which should (for ATI schools) address resource inequities

Alaska’s Empowerment for Successful School Improvement Process

Alaska’s Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process consists of three key components: evidence-based practices, continuous improvement steps, and differentiated supports.

Evidence-Based Practices

Empowerment For Successful School Improvement focuses on evidence-based practices adapted from *Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: Indicators Of Effective Practice*¹ and *Shifting School Culture To Spark Rapid Improvement: A Quick Start Guide For Principals And Their Teams*², both pivotal publications on school improvement from the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd in 2018. “Implemented effectively, the practices in the framework should not only help students assigned to failing schools but by creating a system that better supports students in these schools, should have a cascading effect that improves the ecosystem of all schools” (Center on School Turnaround at WestEd, 2017, p. 1). The practices are clustered into four practice areas: Transformational Leadership, Talent Development, Instructional Transformation, and Culture of Learning.

Success indicators within each practice area reflect indicators of performance. An indicator is “a concrete behavioral expression of a particular professional practice that research has shown to contribute to student learning” (Center on School Turnaround, 2018, p. 1). The indicators play an important role in continuous school improvement as they provide practices that should be in place for effective leadership, instruction, and learning to take place. Figure 4 displays the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Four Domains for School Improvement, and Appendix A lists the indicators in each domain.

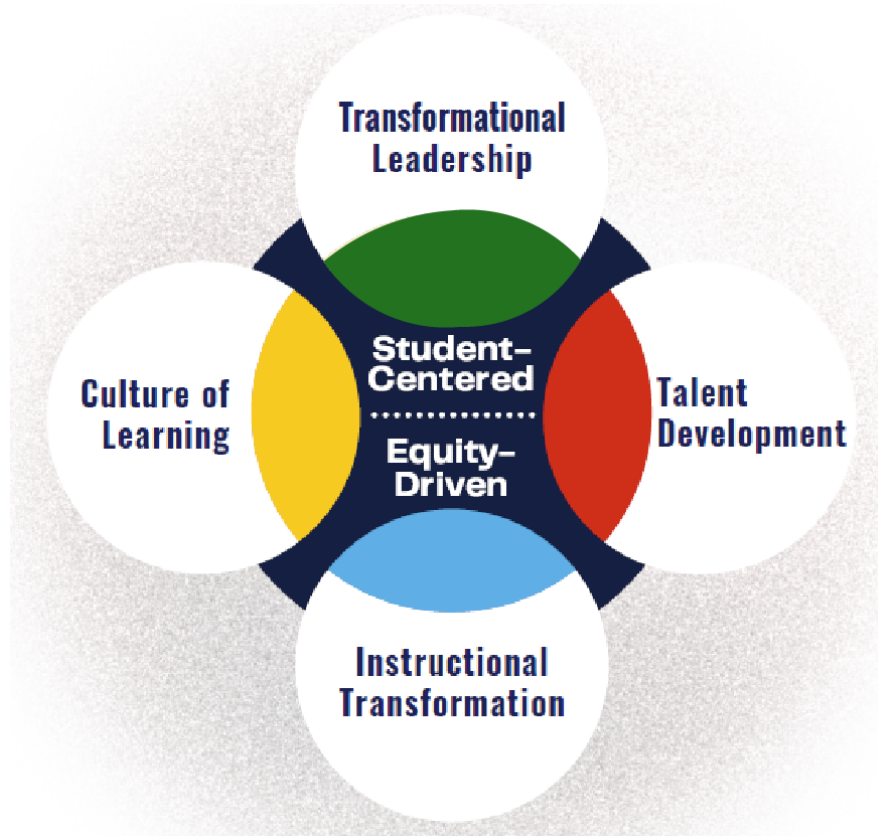
Transformational Leadership

Leaders focused on continuous improvement, regardless of whether at the SEA, LEA, or school level, recognize the urgency of improvement and communicate this urgency as a call to action. They put improvement front and center, making it a key part of all operation and management functions. Strong schools set the direction through both short- and long-term goals that focus on addressing gaps and reducing barriers to improved performance. Leaders monitor progress towards the established goals and hold all, including themselves, accountable for both progress and lapses in performance. They advocate for data and use data to identify effective supports for districts and schools throughout the improvement process to ensure success. Sustained continuous improvement requires competent, dedicated staff at all levels of the education system.

¹ Redding, S., McCauley, C., Ryan Jackson, K., & Dunn, L. (2018). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: Indicators of effective practice*. WestEd. <https://www.wested.org/resources/four-domains-indicators-of-effective-practice/#:~:text=That%20framework%20identifies%20four%20areas,critical%20practices%20for%20taking%20action.>

² Redding, S., & Corbett, J. (2018). *Shifting school culture to spark rapid improvement: A quick start guide for principals and their teams*. WestEd. <https://csti.wested.org/resource/shifting-school-culture-to-spark-rapid-improvement-a-quick-start-guide-for-principals-and-their-teams/>

Figure 4. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Four Domains of School Improvement³



Talent Development

Talent development enhances and supports building the capacity of the entire school staff to impact student outcomes, from teaching staff to custodians to paraprofessionals. Each district has policies and procedures in place to recruit, develop, retain, and sustain the most effective personnel in every position at every level. Instructional and leadership skills are continuously developed through professional learning, mentorship, and coaching.

Instructional Transformation

This domain focuses on building and sustaining system-wide support for needed change in instruction. Effective instructional practice includes strong standards, research-based pedagogy, data-based planning, standards-based instruction, formative and summative

³ Adapted from Redding, S., McCauley, C., Ryan Jackson, K., & Dunn, L. (2018). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: Indicators of effective practice*. WestEd. And Redding, S., & Corbett, J. (2018). *Shifting school culture to spark rapid improvement: A quick start guide for principals and their teams*. WestEd.

assessments, differentiation and personalization, and successful classroom management. All instruction is delivered in a positive learning environment of high expectations, rigorous learning opportunities, and evidence-based supports and interventions that address the academic, behavioral, physical, and social-emotional needs of students.

Culture of Learning

Continuous improvement is a collaborative effort between the school and the community. It requires a significant shift in both expectations and efforts. This calls for structures and opportunities for staff to work together and for the school to build relationships and collaborate with the community on common goals, approaches, and focused attention centered on student learning. Mutual respect permeates throughout the school and community culture where each student is valued regardless of levels of performance, socioeconomic level, gender, race, and abilities. “A positive school climate reflects a supportive and fulfilling environment, learning conditions that meet the needs of all students, people sure of their roles and relationships in student learning, and a culture that values trust, respect, and high expectations” (Center on School Turnaround, 2018, p. 26).

Districts and schools are encouraged to use the Four Domains and their indicators to assess current performance and build plans to improve performance and student outcomes. Appendix B has a crosswalk of the Four Domains and Indicators with Alaska’s Education Challenge Strategic Priorities.

Continuous Improvement Steps




Empowerment For Successful School Improvement includes specific steps or activities that work together to plan, implement, and report on continuous improvement progress and impacts (see Figure 5). Continuous school improvement should not be federal or state-driven, although federal and state requirements are part of the process. The continuous growth and improvement of a school are more than checking off boxes for compliance.

Empowerment For Successful School Improvement empowers schools to design and implement plans that recognize and honor the context of each school and its larger role within the community it serves as well as the broader state education system. It allows for the use of evidence-based practices within each school’s context and encourages contribution to the evidence based on their students’ results. The process empowers districts to employ funding and supports that are informed by each school’s plan instead of each school developing a plan to spend funds.

DEED acknowledges the typical, one size fits all, urban-centric model typically used throughout the nation does not recognize or honor the assets and challenges unique to rural schools and communities. Although the steps in the Empowerment For Successful School Improvement cycle are the same for both urban and rural districts, how the steps are implemented varies to meet the context of the school and its community. After all, educating students so they can “shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves,

exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them” (Alaska Statute 14.03.015) is the cornerstone of Alaska’s education system.

Figure 5. Empowerment For Successful School Improvement Steps

Step 1 Conduct Situational Analysis	 Step 2 Create Actionable Plan	 Step 3 Implement, Monitor, and Adjust Plan	 Step 4 Reflect, Celebrate, Share
Engage internal and external stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand context, • identify assets and challenges, and • create goals with outcomes, aligned to Alaska’s Challenge, to improve student learning and success. 	Create an actionable plan, informed by the situational analysis, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design strategies and actions to reach goals, • identify evidence-based programs and services to strengthen equitable instruction and supports to students and families, • leverage assets to address challenges, and • identify measurements for success. 	Implement plan using community partnerships to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete all actions and strategies, • monitor progress and adjust as needed to stay the course, and • report progress and accomplishments to internal and external stakeholders. 	Recognize successes and use lessons to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • celebrate successes, • reflect and apply lessons learned to continued planning, and • contribute to the larger Alaska education system.

Differentiated Supports

Continuous improvement is a cyclical journey, and just as we need specific resources and supports when taking a journey across Alaska, districts and schools need specific resources and supports for their continuous improvement journey. Students have unique needs that require differentiated support, and districts and schools do as well.

Empowerment For Successful School Improvement includes differentiated supports based on a school or district’s performance, capacity needs, improvement patterns, and designations through the state’s accountability system. Supports include:

- AKLearns.org, a website with resources for families, students, community, teachers, leaders, and grant recipients <https://aklearns.org/>
- AK State Standards teaching and training <https://education.alaska.gov/standards>

- Alaska’s Accountability System for School Success resources <https://education.alaska.gov/akaccountability>
- Alaska’s Reading Playbook <https://aklearns.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/AlaskasReadingPlaybook.ac-1.pdf>

School Improvement Roles and Responsibilities

The SEA, LEAs, and schools each play a critical role in continuous improvement to unite us in improving student learning through the Alaska’s Education Challenge.

The State Education Agency (SEA)

DEED provides leadership, resources, and information to stakeholders through deliberate and coordinated outreach. Its core services include:

- *Public School Funding:* Ensure funding is appropriately distributed to recipients based on legislative appropriation and by statute and in accordance with the foundation formula, other formula programs, or legislative intent for funding outside the primary funding formulas.
- *Fiscal Accountability, Compliance, and Oversight:* Ensure the department effectively and efficiently manages state, federal, and other funding by providing comprehensive fiscal and administrative services.
- *School Effectiveness Programs:* Assist school districts by providing programs, technical on-site and distance-delivery support, and early intervention services in an effort to increase the statewide graduation rate.
- *Active Partnerships:* Provide opportunities for, and collaborate with, government entities and other public and private organizations to engage in active partnerships in pursuit of state educational goals.

The Local Education Agency (LEA)

The LEA, otherwise known as district, is the primary driver of its own improvement as well as the improvement of its schools. The LEA is a partner with DEED in identifying and providing support to address low-performing schools. Together DEED and each LEA work side-by-side to build local school capacity for improvement which calls for

- Operational effectiveness in carrying out central office functions,
- Strong infrastructure for school leadership, instruction, and learning, and
- Specific differentiated supports matched to identified school needs.

The LEA reviews and approves school improvement plans, provides funding and oversight of expenditures to schools for improvement, and monitors school progress in implementing their improvement plans. The LEA identifies a district liaison to work with

assigned DEED staff to provide guidance to schools in developing improvement plans, reviewing and approving school improvement plans, identifying needed differentiated supports for success, and developing and implementing a plan of support.

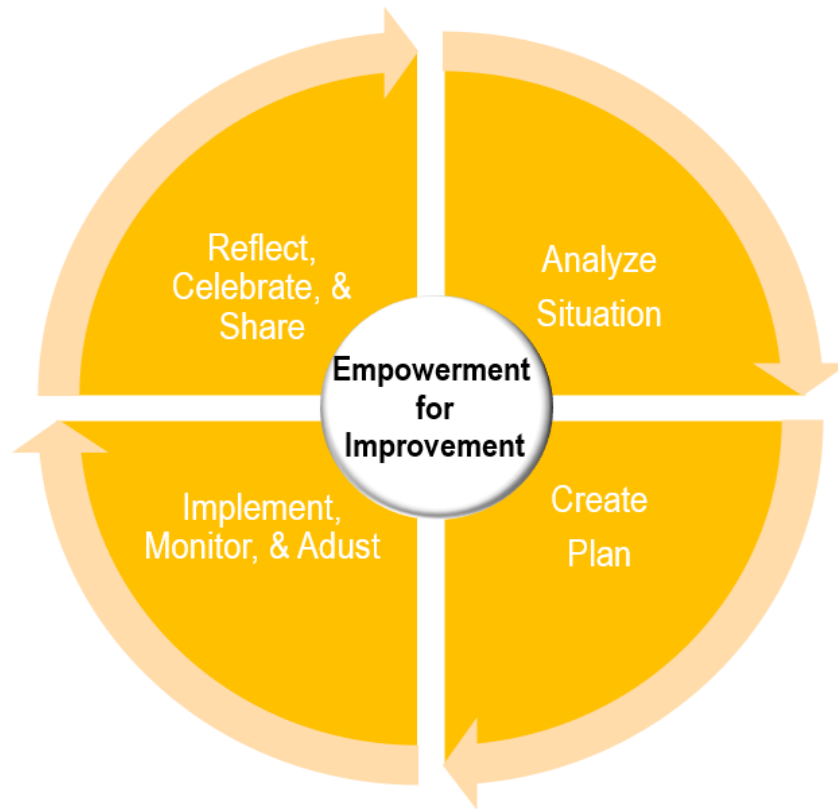
Figure 6. District System of Support for School Improvement



Schools

The local school, with the community, creates and implements an actionable improvement plan using DEED’s continuous improvement cycle. Supports provided by the district and DEED assist schools and communities in effectively implementing, monitoring, adjusting, and reporting annually on improvement results.

Figure 7. The School Improvement Cycle



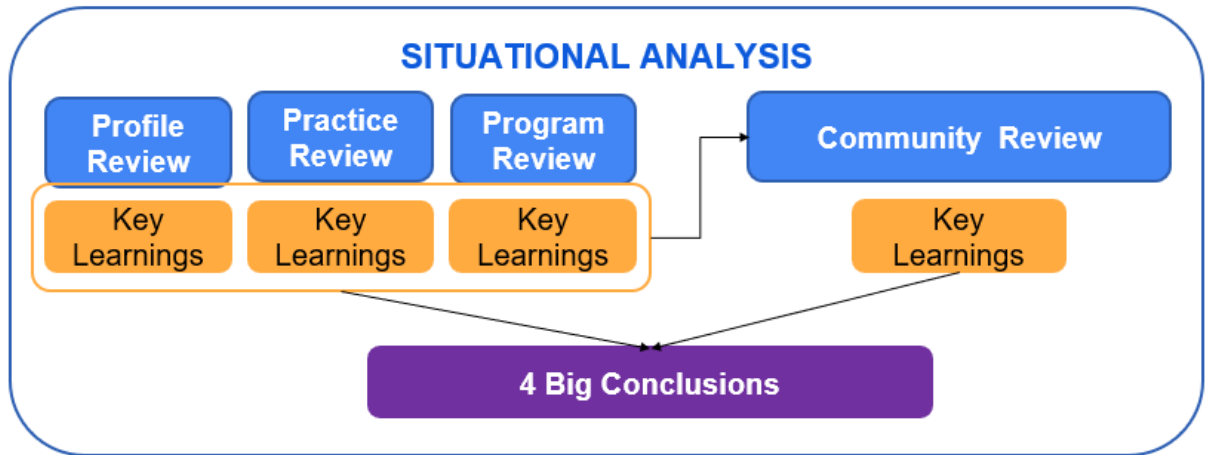
Conclusion

The DEED’s Empowerment for Successful School Improvement is designed to empower and support schools and districts in improving and sustaining equitable, high-quality education for students throughout Alaska. It aligns and supports the overall goals of Alaska’s Education Challenge while also meeting federal and state requirements related to improving identified low-performing schools. Appendix C shows the alignment of Alaska’s Education Challenge with evidence-based practices (Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Four Domains of School Improvement) at the core of the process.

Figure 8 depicts the entire Empowerment process. The process and steps are the same for all schools; however, the “how” is tailored to each school or type of school. What follows is a Playbook detailing the “how” of implementation for schools that recognizes the unique assets and challenges of schools and the communities they serve.

Figure 8. Empowerment Process for Successful School Improvement

Establish School Community Team



REFLECTION

1. *What about Alaska's Education Challenge and DEED's commitment to continuous improvement resonates with you, your school, your community?*
2. *What is the foundation of Alaska's Empowerment for Successful School Improvement? (Hint: think principles, theory, alignment)*
3. *What are the components of the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement? (Hint: 3)*
4. *What are the key improvement steps for all schools throughout Alaska? (Hint: 4)*
5. *Where are the flexibilities for schools and districts and their varying contexts? (Hint: If not what then...)*

NOTES



Part 2: Empowerment for Successful School Improvement



Introduction

Alaskan communities develop and attract greatly talented people. The geographic remoteness of Alaska requires forming strong relational networks that provide the social foundation of communities. Communities, especially the most remote, must maintain a certain degree of self-sufficiency while working together as a whole which means community members must constantly learn, adapt, and develop to meet their local needs from within. It requires each community member to bring their whole self to the table, resulting in very thin boundaries between one's social and professional life. This overlap brings a sense of positive interdependency where people look after the well-being and safety of others throughout the entire community. Often schools serve as community centers, offering events, activities, cultural sharing and learning, and access to adult education opportunities. Each community has an individual culture, feeling, and atmosphere. Students succeed when education is delivered through these long standing strong traditions, values, and cultures. Educators can strengthen their instruction and learning for students by engaging the community inside and outside the classroom.

Each community is different, and when we look at schools that perform well, there is a direct connection between how well the community and the school engage with each other. Using a strengths-based approach is another commonality among high performing schools, both in rural and urban school locations. This approach requires time to develop a deep understanding of the local community and with the local community.

Effectively improving low-performing schools and sustaining improved performance is a daunting task for any school or district, especially those in rural communities. Education reform has typically used a deficit model for school improvement, particularly for rural schools. McShane and Smarick, in their Big Story Newsletter for Education Next, note:

“A consistent criticism of education reform is that much of the agenda has been based on what some call a ‘deficit mindset.’ That is, reformers saw individuals, institutions, and communities as broken and in need of fixing (or worse, saving), not as individuals, institutions, and communities with culture, history, and potential that could be cultivated and built upon.” (2019, p. 1)

In addition, small communities are often stereotyped as homogeneous; however, they are anything but that. Alaska is home to many communities that include diverse Alaskan Native peoples with long standing cultures, languages, and traditions. Sustaining their history, culture, and language is an important goal of each community and its schools.

Schools also play a critical role in training future leaders and skilled workers to build or sustain local communities. A large challenge for some schools is that education and training in their local community may be interrupted because of their small size. Many communities are on the brink of falling under the 10-student minimum required to receive state education funding. However, even these small schools have a lot to offer. Positive and progressive work is occurring at some small schools as a result of an asset-based approach for improvement.

An asset-based approach focuses on strengths rather than deficits. Diversity in culture, language, experiences, and thinking are valued. Students, families, and even teachers are viewed not by what they do not have, but by how their diversity adds to the instruction and learning experience. “An asset-based approach to understanding rural communities and schools does not mean ignoring the challenges but rather framing the problems differently” (Seelig, 2021, p. 14). It is not about solving problems, rather it is about engaging the community with the schools in examining its economic variables, demographic, and cultural attributes, and environmental or geographical characteristics and finding alternative ways to capitalize on assets to address challenges (Howley & Redding, 2021).

Addressing school improvement calls for a systems approach with representation and collaboration amongst school and community members beyond the education bubble.

Using Alaska’s Empowerment Playbook

This playbook addresses the “how” in the continuous improvement process, focusing on schools and communities. It is a step-by-step guide for superintendents, principals, staff, and communities on how to engage in the school continuous improvement cycle while recognizing the unique assets and challenges of communities and their schools. Each of the four modules in the Playbook coincides with a continuous improvement step.

- Module 1: Conduct a Situational Analysis, an asset-based review of the school's current situation and the community context in which the school serves.
- Module 2: Develop an Actionable Plan, a plan that includes quick wins and attention to long-term goals.
- Module 3: Implement the Actionable Plan, a performance cycle that monitors both implementation and results.
- Module 4: Celebrate, Learn, and Share, a thoughtful and purposeful recognition of successes, documentation of lessons learned, and sharing with the broader community.

Each module includes tips on preparation, facilitation, and tools to assist school leaders in meaningfully engaging staff and community members through planning and collaborating with community leaders and organizations to effectively implement the plan. A glossary has been provided after Module Four to build common language for this work. We encourage schools to add to the glossary as needed, including those relevant terms from Eskimo-Aleut, Athabaskan-EyaK-Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian language families of Alaska's Native peoples.⁴

Setting The Stage: The School and Community Leadership Team

Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process calls for engagement of the community, including families of students, alongside school leaders and staff throughout the process, from the first step to the last. School leaders work with community leaders to form a School and Community Leadership Team to carry out the improvement process. "By forming a leadership team, not only do you engage in best practices to ensure that partnerships will be truly collaborative endeavors between the school and community, but you are well-positioned to enhance, rather than duplicate, services already available at the school."⁵

The ideal size of School and Community Leadership Team is highly dependent on the size of the school and community. The key is to have a diverse representative group that is inclusive, but not so large as to impact the ability to have deep, honest discussions and complete the required work. School and Community Leadership Team members should include, but are not limited to,

- Tribal and Community Leaders
- School Leaders (principals, assistant or vice principals, head or lead teachers)
- Teachers representing each grade or grade band (e.g., grades K–2, 3–5, middle school, high school), specialty teachers (e.g., special education, reading specialists). Note: In many small rural schools, it may be possible to have all teachers as team members.

⁴ Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks at <https://www.uaf.edu/anlc/languages.php>

⁵ Roche, M. K., & Strobach, K. V. (2019). *Nine elements of effective school community partnerships to address student mental health, physical health, and overall wellness*. Coalition for Community Schools. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED593295.pdf>

- Paraprofessionals and support and operational staff representatives, such as a custodian or cafeteria staff
- Family representatives (non-school employees) of students attending the school

Student voice is valued so the Team should also consider including students, when appropriate. It is important to recruit members and meet at least once BEFORE the first step (Module 1) to review the purpose of the team, its charge, and the Playbook. The purpose of this initial meeting is to establish the team and its charge of implementing the improvement process described in the Playbook.

Team Norms

During the initial meeting, the team engages in the practice of norming, where team norms are discussed, agreed to, and behaviors are identified that will bring norms to action. Norming builds stronger collaboration and communication, fosters a sense of safety and belonging so honest conversations can occur, and encourages empathy and caring for one another. The teams' norms are reviewed at the start of all meetings, and time is allowed for changes to be made and agreed to. It brings a “list of norms” to life!

Team Roles

Roles for each team meeting include:

- Facilitator to run the meeting, usually the school and/or community leaders, depending on the task,
- Note taker to capture key ideas, concepts, or information discussed, decisions made, and next steps,
- Timekeeper to keep the meeting on time, and
- Process Observer to provide feedback to the team on how closely they followed the agreed norms.



Tool Alert

- *Sample Recruitment Letter*
- *Initial Meeting Agenda*
- *Norm Setting Activity Tool*
- *Meeting Calendar*
- *Meeting Routines*

People can change roles from meeting to meeting depending on the task. Changing roles also provides all team members experience and builds capacity in carrying out the role. Tools are provided throughout the playbook for use by the facilitator, note taker, timekeeper, and process observer.

Communication


Communication and meeting routines are also established. Communication can include an online shared folder to provide easy access to all related documents, notes, and decisions. A meeting calendar is agreed upon so members can make plans to be available. Routines

can also include how to open or close a meeting. For example, an elder could open the meeting with a traditional opening or prayer. A routine such as this honors the culture and traditions of the Tribe and sets the tone for the important work together.

Finally, the team reviews the Playbook in preparation for the next gathering to complete Module 1: Conducting a Situational Analysis. Each team member should receive or have access to the Playbook, as it contains areas for notes and tools or forms used throughout each step.

REFLECTION

- 1. *What about the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement information provided resonates with you, your school, your community?*
- 2. *What cultural and community traditions can be shared to strengthen our process and team?*
- 3. *Who are the key leaders and how can we deeply engage them as leaders and facilitators of our process?*
- 4. *How can we share the Playbook with others and learn together?*

NOTES 

Sample Recruitment Letter for the School and Community Leadership Team

[School Letterhead]

[Name]

[Mailing Address]

[City, AK ZIP CODE]

[Date]

Dear [Name],

As a valued member of our community, you are invited to join a School and Community Leadership team which will focus on our students' learning. We believe that working together as a community is the strongest way to improve our students' education.

Our team of families, tribal leaders, and school staff will meet [monthly] during the school year to build and implement an actionable plan focused on meeting the unique needs of our students. Through our planning and collaborative work, we will realize a stronger school and community partnership resulting in improved student success.

Please let me know by [date] if you can participate.

Sincerely,

[your signature]

[your typed name]

School and Community Leadership Team Initial Meeting Agenda

(Occurs prior to Module 1 and is approximately 2½ hours)

Prior to the meeting, the School Leader confirms date, time, and location and prepares meeting materials for School and Community Team members. After the meeting, the School Leader reviews the notes, posts them in an accessible place, or sends them to each team member.

School: _____ Principal: _____

ESSA Designation: _____ Date and Time: _____

Assigned Roles

Facilitator: _____ Note Taker: _____

Timekeeper: _____ Process Observer: _____

Team Members			
First Name	Last Name	Position/Role	Present: Yes/No

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)
10 mins	Facilitator	Introductions (Each team member tells a bit about themselves)	
10 mins	Facilitator	<p>Share the Meeting Purpose <i>“The purpose of the meeting is to establish the team and its charge of implementing the empowerment process described in the Playbook.”</i></p> <p>If school has ESSA designation, share designation and what it means.</p> <p>Walk through the Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Team Norms • Review Roles and Responsibilities • Introduce the Playbook • Establish Communications and Meetings Routines • Set Future Meeting Calendar 	
5 mins	Facilitator		
20 mins	Facilitator	Establish Team Norms (See Norm Setting Activity Tool)	
3 mins	Facilitator	Review Roles and Responsibilities (See Role Description Chart)	
50 mins	Facilitator	Introduce the Playbook (Walkthrough Table of Contents and the brief description of each module under Using Alaska’s Empowerment Playbook)	
15 mins	Facilitator	Establish Communication and Meetings Routines (e.g., adopt communication protocols or tools used between meetings, determine how to open and close meetings)	
9 mins	Facilitator	Set Future Meetings Calendar (Schedule out meetings for Modules 1 – 4)	
10 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Due Date Person(s) Responsible

School and Community Leadership Team Norm Setting Activity

The School Leader uses the following steps to engage School Leadership Team in identifying and agreeing to norms or behaviors team members will demonstrate during their work together.

- Step 1. Ask everyone to think about a positive team experience and share what worked well.
- Step 2. Summarize what makes a positive team experience.
- Step 3. Ask individuals to suggest behaviors/norms that would contribute to overall team success. Keep track of suggestions on a chart paper or digitally.
- Step 4. Discuss suggestions as a group and decide which suggestions could serve as norms.
- Step 5. List three to five norms that the School and Community Leadership Team agrees to follow during all team meetings. Identify examples and nonexamples of the norms in action.
- Step 6. Discuss how to hold each other accountable in a respectful way for the behaviors/norms.
- Step 7. Discuss how the team will respond if someone consistently does not honor the behaviors/norms.

School and Community Leadership Team Norms
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

School and Community Leadership Team Meeting Calendar

Team Meetings	Date	Time	Location
Initial Meeting			
Module 1 - Conduct a Situational Analysis			
Looking Within*			
Activity 1 - Profile Review			
Activity 2 - Practice Review			
Activity 3 - Program Review			
Looking Beyond**			
Share Data Key Conclusions with Community			
Share Data Key Conclusions with Community			
Bringing It Together***			
Identify 4 Big Conclusions and Prioritize			
Module 2 - Develop an Actionable Plan			
Plan Development Meeting****			
Plan Development			
Plan Development			
Plan Development			
Module 3 - Implement Actionable Plan			
Monthly Meeting			
Monthly Meeting			
Monthly Meeting			
Monthly Meeting			
Monthly Meeting			
Monthly Meeting			
Module 4 - Reflect, Celebrate and Share			

*Looking Within Activities 1, 2, and 3 can be completed APPROXIMATELY in one 3-hour session or multiple sessions.

** Looking Beyond can be APPROXIMATELY one 2-hour session or two, 1-hour sessions.

***Bringing It Together is APPROXIMATELY one 1-hour session.

****Plan Development Meeting can be APPROXIMATELY one 3-hour session or multiple sessions.

Module 1: Conducting a Situational Analysis

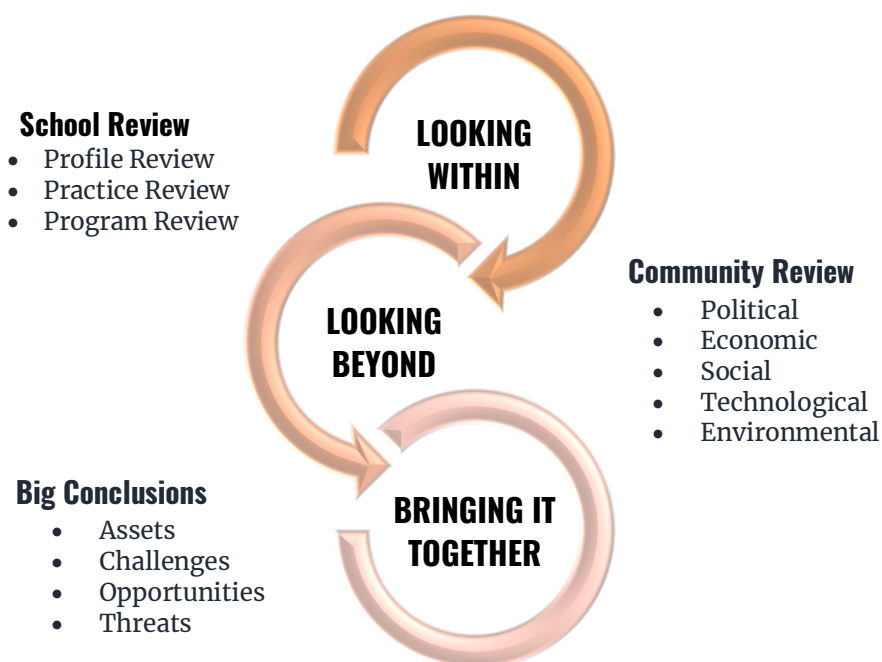
(Approximate Time: 3 sessions, one to two hours long, or multiple smaller sessions equaling five to six hours)



A Situational Analysis, sometimes referred to as a comprehensive needs assessment, is an extensive review of the school's current situation and the community context in which the school serves.

The **LOOKING WITHIN** is a deep reflection of the school's student performance, implementation of evidence-based practices that improve the quality and results of a school and its students based on research, and the effectiveness of programs or services currently being provided to students. **LOOKING BEYOND** goes beyond the school walls and reflects on the school within the community it serves, examining the external assets and influences that impact the school, student learning, and success. **BRINGING IT TOGETHER** puts together all of the learnings, key points, and priorities identified and draws three to four "big conclusions" to inform the development of the school's actionable plan.

Figure 9. Empowerment For Successful School Improvement Situational Analysis



NOTE: THE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS IS CONDUCTED EVERY THREE YEARS, WHEREAS AN ANNUAL REVIEW EXAMINES THE IMPLEMENTATION AND PROGRESS OF THE SCHOOL'S SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AT THE END OF EACH YEAR.



(Approximate Time: One four-hour session or multiple one-hour sessions)

The purpose of LOOKING WITHIN is to use student and other data to understand current student and school performance, assets and how they are currently being leveraged, and challenges in implementing a high-quality instructional system that meets the needs of each student to better prepare them for the next stage of learning or life.

LOOKING WITHIN is a comprehensive review that starts with student data and moves through examining staff trends, facilities, and other factors within the school that support or impact student learning and success. At the conclusion of LOOKING WITHIN, the team

really knows the school, its workings, and its students and staff. It is a deep reflection of the school's assets, what is working, and what to prioritize for action.

LOOKING WITHIN is comprised of three activities as seen in Figure 9.

Figure 10. LOOKING WITHIN Activities



Logistics

Prior to meeting, the school leader ensures the following are in place:

- A designated location with a smartboard, projector, and screen or wall to project forms while working on them
- Room configuration that allows for whole group and small group work
- A visible norming document or copies for each member
- An identified note taker and timekeeper who are aware of their roles
- A method for taking and managing notes, e.g., a computer or chart paper
- Technology access for any virtual participants
- Meeting materials including a copy of the Playbook for each team member and any other general information

It is important to note that FERPA requirements and security protocols **must be followed** to protect student and staff identity.

Activity 1. Profile Review

During the Profile Review, the School and Community Leadership Team reviews demographic, performance, and operational data and summarizes key learnings from the review.

Preparation

The following materials needed for this activity include:

- Agenda (sample provided in this Playbook)
- School and Community Leadership Team Norms
- Data packet containing the following suggested data
 - School Type (Grade Levels)

- Enrollment trends for the past three years
- Ethnicity trends for the past three years, including students from poverty, students from culturally or linguistically diverse groups, students with disabilities, students whose families are experiencing homelessness, students of migrant families, and English learners
- Accountability Measures
 - Academic achievement
 - Student growth
 - Graduation rate, if applicable
 - Progress in achieving English language proficiency
 - School climate and culture survey results
- Student attendance
- Staff data including attendance, retention, and certifications
- School culture and climate data
- Facilities, maintenance reports, and safety reports



Tool Alert

- *Profile Review Meeting Agenda*
- *Profile Review Form*

Facilitation

The school leader facilitates the meeting and begins with greeting, meeting purpose, and outcomes to accomplish. The School and Community Leadership Team uses the data packet and any other information available to identify trends, strengths, and challenges related to the school's demographics, performance, workforce, and conditions for learning. Key questions to answer through the Profile Review include:

What are the demographic strengths and challenges?

1. How has enrollment changed over time, especially noting occurrences by special subgroups? What are the implications for the school's actionable plan?
2. What are the teacher retention patterns? How does the trend impact school improvement?
3. How has the student and staff absenteeism rate changed over time? What are the implications for the school's actionable plan?
4. Other thoughts/conclusions

What strengths and challenges are indicated by student outcome data?

5. What are the differences in outcomes (e.g., proficiency, growth) based on grade level?
6. What are the differences in outcomes (e.g., proficiency, growth) of specific student groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disabilities, English language proficiency)?
7. What are the differences or gaps in outcomes (e.g., proficiency, growth) based on subject area?
8. What are the differences in growth performance by grade level, class, or subject?
9. What are the implications of student outcome data on school improvement?
10. Other thoughts/conclusions

What are the strengths and challenges of our facilities and safety efforts?

11. What are the maintenance reports telling us about our facilities?
12. How are we leveraging our facilities for school community connections?
13. How do our facilities show our cultural uniqueness? What might need to improve?
14. What are we doing well in terms of providing a safe learning environment? What else is needed?


What are the school climate and culture survey results telling us about our school and learning culture?

15. What are survey results telling us about patterns of students', parents', and school personnel's experience of school life?
16. How does our culture reflect our norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures? How might we strengthen the school's culture of learning?

Key learnings are summarized at the conclusion of the meeting using the Profile Review Form.

REFLECTION

- 1. *What questions come to mind as you think about available data and what additional data are needed to determine performance patterns?*
- 2. *How often are data dialogues conducted among faculty? Staff? School leadership?*
- 3. *How are data and analysis conclusions shared among faculty, staff, and the community?*
- 4. *Are there data beyond state accountability data that would be helpful to the school’s improvement process?*

 NOTES

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)
2 mins	Facilitator	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)	
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Norms (Post Norms visible in meeting room)	
4-5 mins	Facilitator	Profile Review (Activity 1 – Profile Review Form)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Close the Meeting (Closing routine)	
10 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Due Date
		Complete Profile Review Form	Person(s) Responsible
1 min	Facilitator	Next Meeting Reminder (Date and Time)	
4 mins	Process Observer	Process Observation Reflection (Process Observer reports out with specific examples on how the team followed the norms)	
	Facilitator	Adjourn (Close the meeting with agreed upon routine)	

***Action Items Review:** Note taker adds items during the meeting and reviews all action items, with due dates and person(s) responsible at end of meeting.

Post meeting, review the meeting minutes with the note taker. Send the minutes to the School and Community Leadership Team members.

LOOKING WITHIN ACTIVITY 1: PROFILE REVIEW FORM

District _____ **School** _____ **Grades** _____

(Student data should include disaggregation by Ethnicity, Poverty, Cultural, Linguistics, Disabilities, Homeless status, Migrant status, and English Learner status where appropriate)

Student Data

Student Enrollment	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior
Student Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior

Student Academic Achievement

Student growth	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior
Graduation rate, if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior
Progress in achieving English language proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior

Staff Data

Teacher Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior
Teacher Retention	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior
Teacher Certification	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior
Support Staff Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Most Recent Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Years Prior

Facilities Report ☐ Most Recent Year ☐ 1 Year Prior ☐ 2 Years Prior

Maintenance Reports ☐ Most Recent Year ☐ 1 Year Prior ☐ 2 Years Prior

Safety Reports ☐ Most Recent Year ☐ 1 Year Prior ☐ 2 Years Prior

School Climate/Culture Results ☐ Most Recent Year ☐ 1 Year Prior ☐ 2 Years Prior

Key Learnings from Activity 1: Profile Review

What are the demographic strengths and challenges?

1. How has enrollment changed over time, especially noting occurrences by special subgroups and staff? What are the implications for the school's actionable plan?
2. What is the staff retention and absenteeism patterns?
3. How has the absenteeism rate changed over time? What are the implications for the school's actionable plan?
4. Other thoughts/conclusions:

What strengths and challenges are indicated by student outcome data?

5. What are the differences in outcomes (e.g., proficiency, growth) based on grade level?
6. What are the differences in outcomes (e.g., proficiency, growth) of specific student groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disabilities, English language proficiency)?
7. What are the differences or gaps in outcomes (e.g., proficiency, growth) based on subject area?
8. What are the differences in growth performance by grade level, class, or subject?
9. What are the implications of student outcome data on school improvement?

Other thoughts/conclusions

What are the strengths and challenges of our facilities and safety efforts?

10. What are maintenance reports telling us about the school facilities?
11. How are we leveraging the facilities for school community connections?
12. How do the facilities show our cultural uniqueness? What might need to improve?
13. What are we doing well in terms of providing a safe learning environment? What else is needed?

What are the school climate/culture results telling us about our school and learning culture?

14. What are the data telling us about patterns of students', parents', and school personnel's experience of school life?
15. How does the school's culture reflect school norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures? How might we strengthen the school's culture of learning?

Activity 2. Practice Review

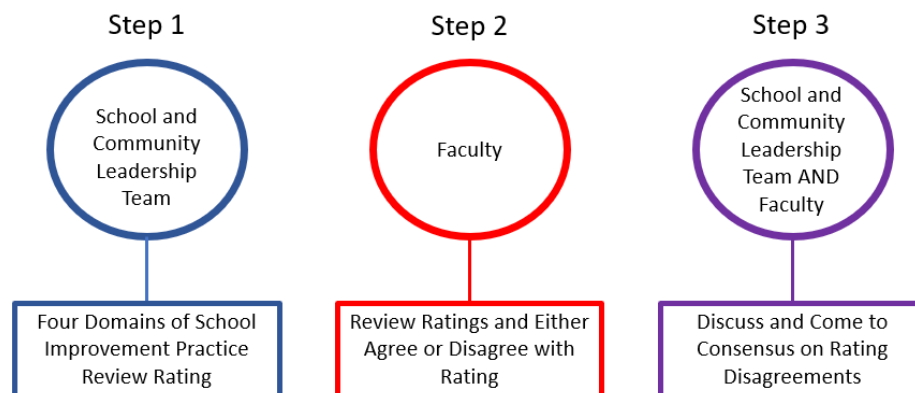
The Practice Review is an opportunity for the School and Community Leadership Team to reflect on evidence-based practices currently used throughout the school and its programs. The Practice Review is based on *Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: Indicators Of Effective Practice*⁶ and *Shifting School Culture To Spark Rapid Improvement: A Quick Start Guide For Principals And Their Teams*⁷. The School and Community Leadership Team indicates the level of implementation for each indicator using the rubric in Table 2.

Table 2. Levels of Practice Implementation Rubric

None	Initial	Partial	Full
The practice is not implemented at this time.	There is an awareness of the practice, training may have occurred; however, the practice is starting with staff focused on starting the steps of implementation.	Some staff have mastered the initial learning and are embedding it as part of their routines.	The practices are implemented by most staff and embedded in the norms and routines of the school and staff.

The Practice Review consists of three steps starting with a review by the School and Community Leadership Team. This is followed by a review by the faculty and then an agreement session during which both the School and Community Leadership Team and faculty reach consensus on final practice ratings.

Figure 11. Practice Review Steps



⁶ Redding, S., McCauley, C., Ryan Jackson, K., & Dunn, L. (2018). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: Indicators of effective practice*. WestEd. <https://www.wested.org/resources/four-domains-indicators-of-effective-practice/#:~:text=That%20framework%20identifies%20four%20areas,critical%20practices%20for%20taking%20action.>

⁷ Redding, S., & Corbett, J. (2018). *Shifting school culture to spark rapid improvement: A quick start guide for principals and their teams*. WestEd. <https://csti.wested.org/resource/shifting-school-culture-to-spark-rapid-improvement-a-quick-start-guide-for-principals-and-their-teams/>

Preparation

The school leader ensures each School and Community Leadership Team member has a copy of the Four Domains of School Improvement Practice Review Form and has reviewed the Levels of Practice Implementation rubric. The purpose of the point-in-time Practice Review is to guide the School and Community Leadership Team in prioritizing current effective practices and identify additional needed practices. These same indicators are a central component of the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process and, therefore, are the practices each school is always addressing in its continuous improvement process.



Tool Alert

- *Practice Review Meeting Agenda*
- *Four Domains Practice Review Form*

Facilitation

Step 1. School and Community Leadership Team Review of Practices

The school leader facilitates a practice discussion and guides the School and Community Leadership Team in reaching consensus on a level of implementation rating. The school leader also ensures evidence is identified and documented to support each rating and that the note taker captures the ratings on the Practice Review Form.

Step 2. Faculty Review of Practices and Ratings

The School and Community Leadership Team then shares their ratings with the entire faculty for their input. The faculty review of the practices and initial ratings by the School and Community Leadership Team can be accomplished in different ways. The school leader could provide each teacher a copy of the School and Community Leadership Team's rating to review individually. Teachers could also review in grade level or subject level teams. The teachers review the ratings, determine if they agree or disagree with the ratings, and indicate their decision on the Faculty Practice Agreement form.

Step 3. School and Community Leadership Team AND Faculty Consensus

Once the faculty complete their review, the school leader brings the School and Community Leadership Team and faculty together to discuss the practices where agreement is not reached. Consensus is reached on a final rating for each practice and noted on the Practice Review form. Figure 9 displays the steps in the Practice Review. It is critical for all teaching staff to participate in this part of the review as they have a critical role in implementing most of the practices.

REFLECTION

- 1. *What questions come to mind as you think about the domains and practices?*
- 2. *How are evidence-based practices identified, implemented, and evaluated?*
- 3. *How often do faculty reflect on the evidence-based practices they are using and how they are impacting school improvement and student learning?*
- 4. *Is there a process to eliminate ineffective practices?*

 NOTES

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)		
2 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)		
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Norms (Post Norms visible in meeting room)		
4.5 mins	Facilitator	Practice Review (Activity 2 – Four Domains of School Improvement Practice Review Form)		
2 mins	Facilitator	Close the Meeting (Closing routine)		
10 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Due Date	Person(s) Responsible
		Complete Four Domains of School Improvement Practice Review Rating Form		
1 min	Facilitator	Next Meeting Reminder (Date and Time)		
4 mins	Process Observer	Process Observation Reflection (Process Observer reports out with specific examples on how the team followed the norms)		
	Facilitator	Adjourn (Close the meeting with agreed upon routine)		

***Action Items Review:** Note taker adds items during the meeting and reviews all action items, with due dates and person(s) responsible at end of meeting.

Post meeting, review the meeting minutes with the note taker. Send the minutes to the School and Community Leadership Team members.

LOOKING WITHIN ACTIVITY 2: PRACTICE REVIEW FORM⁸

Domain 1: Transformational Leadership						
Practice 1A. Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency						
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation			Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full
Sc-1A.0:	School Leader establishes a School Leadership Team comprised of, but not limited to, school leaders, community leaders, teachers and staff representatives, family representatives, and students as appropriate that meets routinely to engage in continuous improvement.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-1A.1:	School Leadership Team sets a clear direction for the school with a stated vision, theory of action, goals, and strategies for rapid and sustained improvement.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-1A.2:	School Leadership Team itemizes and appropriately distributes leadership functions among teachers.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-1A.3:	Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by School Leadership Team, are used to routinely share improvement priorities across teachers and staff, with students, and with the school's broader community.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁸ Adapted from Redding, S., McCauley, C., Ryan Jackson, K., & Dunn, L. (2018). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: Indicators of effective practice*. WestEd. And Redding, S., & Corbett, J. (2018). *Shifting school culture to spark rapid improvement: A quick start guide for principals and their teams*. WestEd.

Practice 1B: Monitor short- and long-term goals							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-1B.1:	School Leadership Team sets student-outcome goals with baseline and student-centered performance measures informed by both summative and formative assessments and results.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.2:	School Leadership Team establishes and monitors implementation of an improvement that is aligned with the school's direction and includes implementation milestones, actions, and annual measures.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.3:	Improvement plan includes necessary changes in personnel, programs, and professional practice as determined by needs assessment (situational analysis).		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.4:	School Leadership Team monitors and adjusts implementation of the improvement plan through regular (typically monthly) review of progress toward goal-aligned milestones, actions, and annual measures.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.5:	School Leadership Team provides and responds to regular (typically quarterly) feedback on progress toward goal-aligned implementation milestones, actions, and annual measures.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 1C: Customize and target support to meet needs							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-1C.1:	School Leadership Team assesses needs at the school, grade, and individual level and identifies three to five key priorities as part of a school improvement plan.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1C.2:	School Leadership Team requests and receives flexibility from the district and/or state around identified areas (e.g., flexibility in hiring staff, school calendars, or use of funds) and offers data as rationale for the requests.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Sc-1C.3:	School Leadership Team plans and implements improvement strategies that are focused on student learning needs.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1C.4:	School Leadership Team plans and implements strategies tailored to address the professional learning needs of individual teachers and staff.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Domain 2: Talent Development							
Practice 2A: Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-2A.1:	School Leadership Team engages school personnel and the community to identify the unique context of their school and uses this information to determine the priority competencies for teachers, staff, and leaders.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2A.2:	School leaders recommend for hire teachers, staff, and leaders from a talent pool identified by the school or district to ensure teachers, staff, and leaders are well matched to school needs.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2A.3:	Teachers, staff, and leaders are engaged in professional learning opportunities that develop and sustain effective practices to succeed in school improvement and the community.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 2B: Target professional learning opportunities							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-2B.1:	School Leadership Team meets at least quarterly to review data to inform professional learning opportunities for teachers and staff then make recommendations in rapid response to identified needs, as aligned with the school's improvement priorities.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2B.2:	School Leadership Team engages in learning opportunities with teachers and staff to learn together and reflects with them on professional practice (e.g., coaching, mentoring, observation).		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Sc-2B.3:	School Leadership Team seeks out, and provides access to, professional learning opportunities that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality to benefit teachers and staff both individually and collectively.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 2C: Set clear performance expectations							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-2C.1:	School Leadership Team provides clear written expectations for teachers, staff, and leaders in terms of roles, effort, and expected outcomes.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2C.2:	School Leadership Team develops and implements schedules to reflect effective use of teacher and staff time, including time for teacher and staff collaboration, professional learning, and review of student data.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2C.3:	School Leadership Team examines, at least once a semester, teacher, staff, and leader role descriptions and commitments so that responsibilities can be equitably distributed.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Domain 3: Instructional Transformation							
Practice 3A. Diagnose and respond to student learning needs							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-3A.1:	School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet regularly (at least monthly) to review implementation data (e.g., documentation from walkthroughs, practice fidelity, training, coaching) and student data (academic and socio-behavioral) for all students as well as subgroups and individual students.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3A.2:	School Leadership Team works with the district and state to secure needed resources for instructional improvement.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3A.3:	School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use student learning		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need.						
Practice 3B: Provide rigorous, evidence-based instruction							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-3B.1:	School Leadership Team provides a menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards to teachers and staff for meeting student needs.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3B.2:	To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3B.3:	Teachers and staff receive initial and ongoing training in using evidence-based instructional practices, with opportunity to practice the skills in the training.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3B.4:	School Leadership Team ensures that all students are taught with evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards and are differentiated to meet their individual needs.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 3C: Remove barriers and provide opportunities							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-3C.1:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet monthly to use an Early Warning Data System or another early identification process to identify specific students in need of support, remove barriers, and fulfill unmet needs of identified students.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3C.2:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.						
Sc-3C.3:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Domain 4: Culture of Learning							
Practice 4A. Build a strong community intensely focused on student learning							
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation				Final Rating
			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-4A.1:	All school leaders, teachers, and staff are organized into teams with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.2:	School Leadership Team or other identified team oversees school-home relationships that enhance student learning and operates with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.3:	School Leadership Team clearly defines, documents, and annually reviews roles, responsibilities, and expectations relative to students' learning for administrators, teachers, families, staff, volunteers, and students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.4:	School promotes, recognizes, and celebrates growth and success in school rituals and routines, such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and classroom wall displays, and student competitions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.5:	School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Practice 4B: Solicit and act upon stakeholder input						
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation			
			None	Initial	Partial	Full
Sc-4B.1:	School Leadership Team annually conducts a survey of teachers and staff, families, students, and community to gauge perceptions about the school, its effectiveness, and their place in it.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-4B.2:	School Leadership Team annually releases to the school community a report of its analysis of survey results, including concrete actions it plans in response to the analysis.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-4B.3:	School Leadership Team annually convenes meetings of teachers and staff, students, student families, and community members to review and discuss the report of its analysis of survey results.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 4C: Engage students and families in pursuing education goals						
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation			
			None	Initial	Partial	Full
Sc-4C.1:	Teachers and staff build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-4C.2:	Teachers and staff help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sc-4C.3:	Teachers and staff help students and their families formulate education goals and understand and use a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 4D: Build from the strengths of diverse cultures and individual students' potential (Responsiveness)						
Indicator	Description	Evidence: Describe what it looks like now. Include examples, artifacts, or evidence	Implementation			

			None	Initial	Partial	Full	
Sc-4D. 1	The school or district provides school faculty and staff with training and support to understand their own and their students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 2	The school or district provides faculty and staff with training and support to avoid stereotyping of students based on assumptions and biases.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 3	The school or district provides professional development for faculty on how to integrate cultural and linguistic material into the curriculum.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 4	The school plans ways to infuse place-based customs and values into the school's operating procedures, rituals, and activities.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 5	The school includes community representatives from different cultural backgrounds in planning and providing school events that feature culture, customs, and values.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 6	The school ensures that the promotion of the history, culture, customs, and values of culturally distinct groups is done in a way that engenders respect for the history, culture, customs, and values of other groups.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

KEY LEARNINGS:

Activity 3. Program Review

A Program Review is also conducted by the School and Community Leadership Team, reflecting on the programs or services currently being implemented in the school, the number of students participating in each program or service, and the effectiveness of each program or service in meeting student needs. Programs are those that are used school-wide or with a majority of students as part of instruction or interventions. This review is critical, as far too often programs are continued year to year because they have always been used or due to a champion's recommendation, not necessarily because the program has a disproportionately positive impact on students being served. The School and Community Leadership Team needs to maintain confidentiality and protect student identifying information, especially in those schools where the number of students participating in a program is so small that the student could be easily identified.

Preparation

Prior to the meeting, the school leader pre-populates the Program Review Form with the programs currently being implemented throughout the school for most of the students and any data related to program results. Programs that are for individual students are not included, such as an intervention for one student with disabilities.



Tool Alert

- *Program Review Meeting Agenda*
- *Program Review Form*

Facilitation

The school leader guides the School and Community Leadership Team in program discussions including implementation fidelity, number of students being served, and results to draw conclusions about the effectiveness and relevancy of each program. Program discussions should include when the program was first implemented, when and how data are gathered, data quality, and quality and effectiveness of training and supports for the program. Table 3 provides an example of a program review. If program data are not available, plans to collect such data are later included in the school's Successful School Improvement Plan. In addition, there needs to be a process to sunset ineffective programs with minimal impact on students and families. The process needs to include sharing program data and decisions with faculty, so they understand why a program is continuing or being discontinued.


Once the Profile, Practice, and Program Reviews are completed, the School and Community Leadership Team summarizes the results, noting key learnings to be shared with community members during the next step, LOOKING BEYOND.

Table 3. Example of a Program Review of Wilson Reading Intervention Program

Program Name Wilson Reading Program			
Program Purpose/Description: An intensive Tier 3 program for students grades 2–12 and adults with word-level deficits who are not making sufficient progress through their current intervention; have been unable to learn with other teaching strategies and require multisensory language instruction; or who require more intensive structured literacy due to a language-based disability, such as dyslexia.			
Target Audience: Students in grades 2–12 in small groups of no more than four or individuals			
Program Data: AIMSweb curriculum-based measurement (R-CBM and R-MAZE) results show that after one year in the program, students demonstrated statistically significant growth in oral reading fluency and reading comprehension.			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Checklist of the 12-step process indicates 90% of teachers are following the 12-step process	60 students grade 2 through 5	AIMSweb curriculum-based measurement results showed improvement in 93% of the students for decoding and spelling	Based on the high fidelity of implementation, student progress, and student improvement overtime, the cost for the number of students benefiting is reasonable

REFLECTION

- 1. *What questions come to mind as you think about the definition of a “program”?*
- 2. *How are program decisions made?*
- 3. *How often are programs reviewed?*
- 4. *Is there a process to sunset ineffective or unneeded programs?*

 NOTES

LOOKING WITHIN PROGRAM REVIEW AGENDA

School: _____ **Principal:** _____

ESSA Designation: _____ **Date and Time:** _____

Assigned Roles

Facilitator: _____ **Note Taker:** _____

Timekeeper: _____ **Process Observer:** _____

[illegible]

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)		
2 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)		
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Norms (Post Norms visible in meeting room)		
4.5 mins	Facilitator	Program Review (Activity 3 – Program Review Form)		
2 mins	Facilitator	Close the Meeting (Closing routine)		
10 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Due Date	Person(s) Responsible
		Complete Program Review Form		
1 min	Facilitator	Next Meeting Reminder (Date and Time)		
4 mins	Process Observer	Process Observation Reflection (Process Observer reports out with specific examples on how the team followed the norms)		
	Facilitator	Adjourn (Close the meeting with agreed upon routine)		

***Action Items Review:** Note taker adds items during the meeting and reviews all action items, with due dates and person(s) responsible at end of meeting.

Post meeting, review the meeting minutes with the note taker. Send the minutes to the School and Community Leadership Team members.

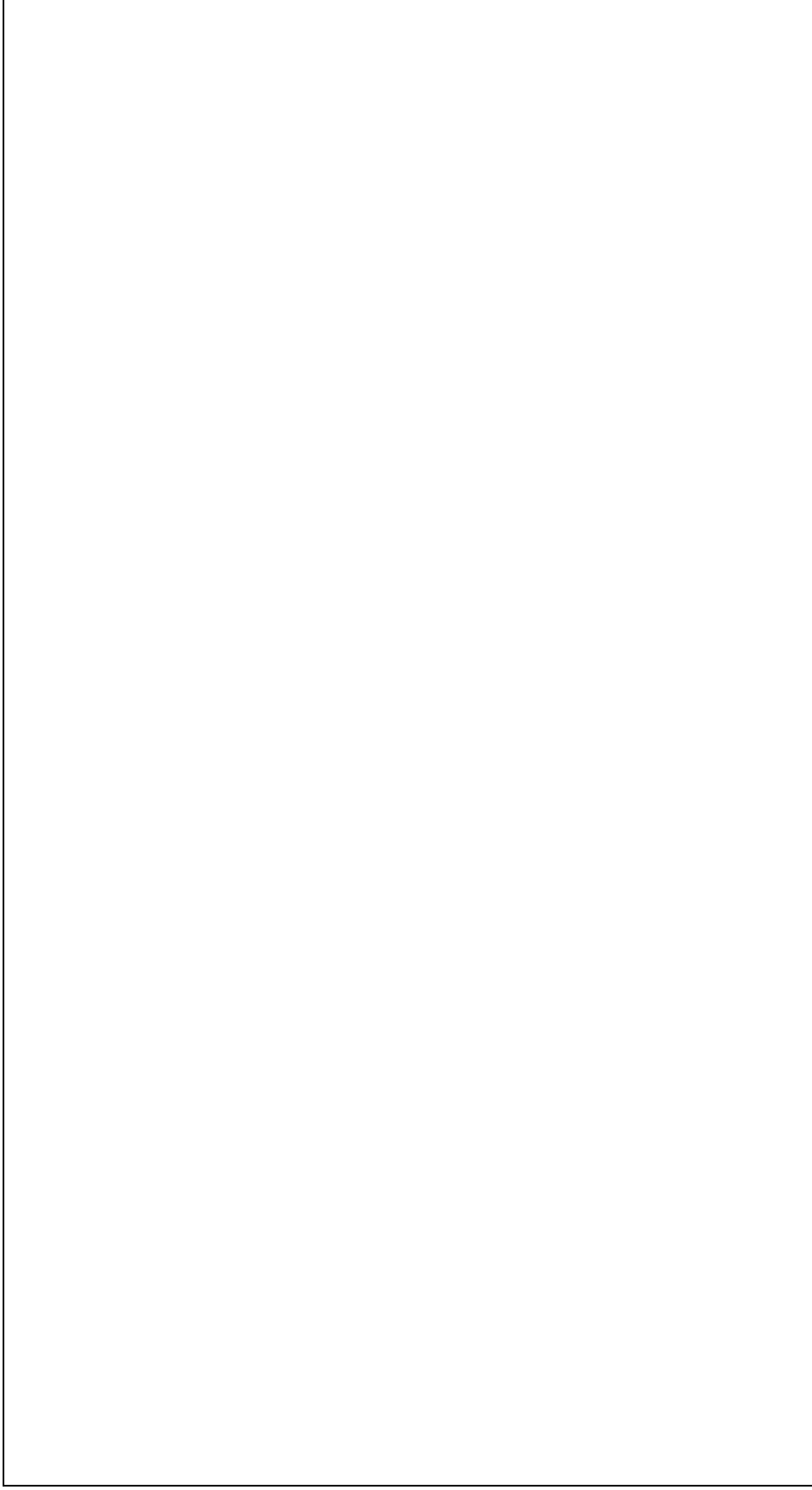
LOOKING WITHIN ACTIVITY 3: PROGRAM REVIEW FORM

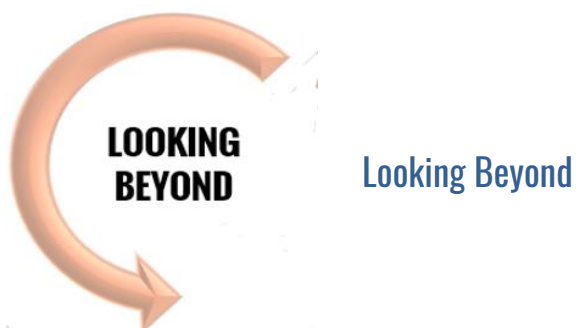
Complete the table for each schoolwide program. A Program Review Example is provided in the Playbook.

Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			
Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			
Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			
Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			

Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			
Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			
Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations
Program Name:			
Program Purpose/Description:			
Target Audience:			
Program Data:			
Fidelity Data	Student Participation	Student Learning Results	Cost Considerations

KEY LEARNINGS:





(Approximate Time: One 2- or 3-hour session)

The School and Community Leadership Team shifts gears and now engages families and community leaders and members in a review of the data and key learnings identified by the Team and faculty. Input is gathered on community and family assets and challenges that could impact the school's overall performance. Factors include economic, social, environmental, technological, and political. Engaging families, a diverse assortment of leaders, business owners, external support providers, and even students during this step ensures all voices are heard and a valuable picture is formed of the community that can be utilized to improve students' learning. Both the school and community reap the benefits long after the situational analysis is completed. The engagement builds trust and results in collaborative investment in capacity to sustain improvement efforts and student outcomes.

Preparation

The School and Community Leadership Team takes time to prepare for the Community Review Meeting. Key questions to consider include:

- What is the purpose of our situational analysis? How do we communicate this purpose to the community?
- Who in the community should participate in the review?
- How do we present our data and learnings in a way that is jargon-free, easily understood, and most meaningful for our community members?
- What are the best methods to ensure their authentic engagement and input?
- What do we hope to learn from our community?

Facilitation

The Community Review meeting is facilitated by a community member on the School and Community Leadership Team or by both school and community leaders. All School and Community Leadership Team members assist to ensure the community review is

meaningful and relevant. It is important that the facilitators(s) use the following facilitation suggestions⁹:

- Engage in dialogue rather than debate
- Focus on issues and interests, not people
- Test assumptions
- Encourage respect among participants
- Ask questions
- Respect time boundaries

Ground rules for the meeting are very useful to avoid conflict. The facilitator(s) can establish the ground rules and share with the group or engage the participants in identifying and agreeing to rules for the discussion. Suggested ground rules include:

- Only one person speaks at a time
- Listen to ideas and think about what people are saying, not whether or not you agree
- Focus on issues and interests, not on positions or personalities
- No side conversations
- When in doubt, ask for clarification

Other members of the School and Community Leadership Team can play key roles in moving discussion along while building positive relationships. Suggested key roles for the members include:

- “Harmonizer: A harmonizer mediates differences between other members and reconciles disagreements and deals with conflict situations.
- Gatekeeper: The gatekeeper works to keep group communication open by encouraging and facilitating the participation of all members in the discussion. This is accomplished by posing questions such as, ‘Does anyone else have thoughts or ideas about . . .,’ or by proposing a process that ensures everyone can contribute to the discussion.
- Supporter: A supporter accepts and values the contributions members make to group discussion or tasks. The supporter seeks to help group members understand and consider points of view, ideas, and suggestions put forth.
- Standards monitor: The standards monitor works to ensure all members are treated with respect, that discussion about different opinions focuses on the issue not the other person, the discussion stays on topic, and other ground rules.”¹⁰

⁹ Adapted from Center for Economic and Community Development. (n.d.). *Engagement toolbox*. Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education at Pennsylvania State University. <https://aease.psu.edu/research/centers/cecd/engagement-toolbox>

¹⁰Center for Economic and Community Development. (n.d.). *Engagement toolbox: Tools and strategies*. Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education at Pennsylvania State University. <https://aease.psu.edu/research/centers/cecd/engagement-toolbox/facilitation/facilitation-tools/tools-and-strategies>

The Community Review can be conducted with one large group, however smaller group discussions may better ensure that all voices are heard. If the group is large, participants can be divided into smaller groups. If this is the case, a School and Community Leadership Team member should be assigned to each group as a facilitator. The School and Community Leadership Team member would then assign a note taker and engage the group in discussing and completing the Community Review Form. After small group discussions, everyone is brought back together to share and reach consensus on the response to the questions on the Community Review Form. The note taker captures the final results on the Community Review Form.



Tool Alert

- *Community Review Meeting Agenda*
- *Community Review Form*

REFLECTION

1. *What questions come to mind as you think of community representation?*
2. *How can we ensure all voices, including student voices, are heard?*
3. *Is there a community development or economic plan? If so, how can a school improvement plan be aligned to a broader community plan?*
4. *How could strategies such as place-based or project-based learning connect learner and community needs?*



NOTES

LOOKING BEYOND FACULTY REVIEW FORM

Domain 1: Transformational Leadership				
Practice 1A. Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-1A.0:	School Leader establishes a School Leadership Team comprised of, but not limited to, school leaders, community leaders, teachers and staff representatives, family representatives, and students as appropriate that meets routinely to engage in continuous improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1A.1:	School Leadership Team sets a clear direction for the school with a stated vision, theory of action, goals, and strategies for rapid and sustained improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1A.2:	School Leadership Team itemizes and appropriately distributes leadership functions among teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1A.3:	Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by School Leadership Team, are used to routinely share improvement priorities across teachers and staff, with students, and with the school's broader community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 1B: Monitor short- and long-term goals				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-1C.1:	School Leadership Team assesses needs at the school, grade, and individual level and identifies three to five key priorities as part of a school improvement plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1C.2:	School Leadership Team requests and receives flexibility from the district and/or state around identified areas (e.g., flexibility in hiring staff, school calendars, or use of funds) and offers data as rationale for the requests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1C.3:	School Leadership Team plans and implements improvement strategies that are focused on student learning needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1C.4:	School Leadership Team plans and implements strategies tailored to address the professional learning needs of individual teachers and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Sc-1B.5:	School Leadership Team provides and responds to regular (typically quarterly) feedback on progress toward goal-aligned implementation milestones, actions, and annual measures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 1C: Customize and target support to meet needs				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-1B.1:	School Leadership Team sets student-outcome goals with baseline and student-centered performance measures informed by both summative and formative assessments and results.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.2:	School Leadership Team establishes and monitors implementation of an improvement or empowerment plan that is aligned with the school's direction and includes implementation milestones, actions, and annual measures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.3:	Improvement or empowerment plan includes necessary changes in personnel, programs, and professional practice as determined by needs assessment (situational analysis).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-1B.4:	School Leadership Team monitors and adjusts implementation of the improvement or empowerment plan through regular (typically monthly) review of progress toward goal-aligned milestones, actions, and annual measures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Domain 2: Talent Development				
Practice 2A. Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-2A.1:	School Leadership Team engages school personnel and the community to identify the unique context of their school and uses this information to determine the priority competencies for teachers, staff, and leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2A.2:	School leaders recommend for hire teachers, staff, and leaders from a talent pool identified by the school or district to ensure teachers, staff, and leaders are well matched to school needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2A.3:	Teachers, staff, and leaders are engaged in professional learning opportunities that develop and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	sustain effective practices to succeed in school improvement and the community.			
Practice 2B: Target professional learning opportunities				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-2B.1:	School Leadership Team meets at least quarterly to review data to inform professional learning opportunities for teachers and staff then make recommendations in rapid response to identified needs, as aligned with the school's improvement priorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2B.2:	School Leadership Team engages in learning opportunities <i>with</i> teachers and staff to learn together and reflects <i>with</i> them on professional practice (e.g., coaching, mentoring, observation).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2B.3:	School Leadership Team seeks out, and provides access to, professional learning opportunities that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality to benefit teachers and staff both individually and collectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 2C: Set clear performance expectations				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-2C.1:	School Leadership Team provides clear written expectations for teachers, staff, and leaders in terms of roles, effort, and expected outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2C.2:	School Leadership Team develops and implements schedules to reflect effective use of teacher and staff time, including time for teacher and staff collaboration, professional learning, and review of student data.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-2C.3:	School Leadership Team examines, at least once a semester, teacher, staff, and leader role descriptions and commitments so that responsibilities can be equitably distributed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Domain 3: Instructional Transformation				
Practice 3A. Diagnose and respond to student learning needs				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-3A.1:	School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet regularly (at least monthly) to review implementation data (e.g., documentation from walkthroughs, practice fidelity, training, coaching) and student data (academic and socio-behavioral) for all students as well as subgroups and individual students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3A.2:	School Leadership Team works with the district and state to secure needed resources for instructional improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3A.3:	School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 3B: Provide rigorous, evidence-based instruction				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-3B.1:	School Leadership Team provides a menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards to teachers and staff for meeting student needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3B.2:	To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3B.3:	Teachers and staff receive initial and ongoing training in using evidence-based instructional practices, with opportunity to practice the skills in the training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3B.4:	School Leadership Team ensures that all students are taught with evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards and are	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	differentiated to meet their individual needs.			
Practice 3C: Remove barriers and provide opportunities				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-3C.1:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet monthly to use an Early Warning Data System or another early identification process to identify specific students in need of support, remove barriers, and fulfill unmet needs of identified students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3C.2:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-3C.3:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Domain 4: Culture of Learning				
Practice 4A. Build a strong community intensely focused on student learning				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-4A.1:	All school leaders, teachers, and staff are organized into teams with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.2:	School Leadership Team or other identified team oversees school-home relationships that enhance student learning and operates with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.3:	School Leadership Team clearly defines, documents, and annually reviews roles, responsibilities, and expectations relative to students' learning for administrators,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	teachers, families, staff, volunteers, and students.			
Sc-4A.4:	School promotes, recognizes, and celebrates growth and success in school rituals and routines, such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and classroom wall displays, and student competitions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4A.5:	School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 4B: Solicit and act upon stakeholder input				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-4B.1:	School Leadership Team annually conducts a survey of teachers and staff, families, students, and community to gauge perceptions about the school, its effectiveness, and their place in it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4B.2:	School Leadership Team annually releases to the school community a report of its analysis of survey results, including concrete actions it plans in response to the analysis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4B.3:	School Leadership Team annually convenes meetings of teachers and staff, students, student families, and community members to review and discuss the report of its analysis of survey results.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice 4C: Engage students and families in pursuing education goals				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-4C.1:	Teachers and staff build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4C.2:	Teachers and staff help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4C.3:	Teachers and staff help students and their families formulate education goals and understand and use a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Practice 4D: Build from the strengths of diverse cultures and individual students' potential (Responsiveness)				
Indicator	Description	Agree	Disagree	If Disagree provide Explanation
Sc-4D. 1	The school or district provides school faculty and staff with training and support to understand their own and their students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 2	The school or district provides faculty and staff with training and support to avoid stereotyping of students based on assumptions and biases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 3	The school or district provides professional development for faculty on how to integrate cultural and linguistic material into the curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 4	The school plans ways to infuse place-based customs and values into the school's operating procedures, rituals, and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 5	The school includes community representatives from different cultural backgrounds in planning and providing school events that feature culture, customs, and values.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sc-4D. 6	The school ensures that the promotion of the history, culture, customs, and values of culturally distinct groups is done in a way that engenders respect for the history, culture, customs, and values of other groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

LOOKING BEYOND COMMUNITY REVIEW AGENDA

School: _____

ESSA Designation: _____

Assigned Roles

Facilitator: _____

Timekeeper: _____

Principal: _____

Date and Time: _____

Note Taker: _____

Process Observer: _____

Small Group Facilitators (if needed):

Small Group 1: _____

Small Group 2: _____

Small Group 3: _____

Small Group 4: _____

Additional Roles (If used)

Harmonizer: _____

Gatekeeper: _____

Supporter: _____

Standards: _____

Team Members			
First Name	Last Name	Position/Role	Present: Yes/No

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)
3 mins	Facilitator	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)	
10 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)	
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Ground Rules (See Facilitation section under Community Review in Playbook)	
20 mins	Facilitator	Share Data and Key Conclusions with Community (Key learnings from Profile, Practice, and Program Reviews)	
35 mins	Facilitator(s)	Conduct Community Review (Community Review Form)	
20 mins	Facilitator	Consensus on Key Points (if small groups occurred)	
	Facilitator	Close the Meeting (Closing routine)	

LOOKING BEYOND COMMUNITY REVIEW FORM

School: _____ Principal: _____
 ESSA Designation: _____ Date and Time: _____

Key Influential Factors on Schools/Education	Possible Considerations	Community Responses
Is there broad community opinion that schools and community partners should work together to address student achievement? How do we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey results • Common vision of education 	
How might our school community culture and partnerships be influencing school and student performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student data • Faculty and staff data • Program data • Practice data 	
How does the community and its resources support its school? How do community partnerships enhance existing school-based services and resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic supports • Social/emotional supports • Student and staff wellness 	
How does the school and its resources support community programs designed to address community issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities • Support • People 	
How are school community partnerships coordinated? What structures are in place to ensure effective communication and collaboration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership framework • Communication plan 	
How are school and community partnerships evaluated and sustained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results framework • Annual reflection and review of results 	
How do the economic factors of the school/district appear to be impacting schools/education in our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and local economic issues • Industry closures or openings 	

Key Influential Factors on Schools/Education	Possible Considerations	Community Responses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fundraising Resource shortages School staff turnover Current and future workforce 	
What, if any, Social Factors appear to be impacting schools/education in our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local population changes School enrollment School attendance Health and safety 	
What, if any, Technological Factors appear to be impacting schools/education in our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technological infrastructure (phone, internet, power, etc.) Shifts to remote or hybrid employment Future technological needs 	
What, if any, Environmental Factors appear to be impacting schools/education in our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weather and climate Shifts in natural resources School expansions Community workforce needs 	
What opportunities do we have to leverage a school community partnership to improve student learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place-based learning Shared leadership roles Joint planning and problem solving 	

Key Learnings from Looking Beyond:



Bringing It Together

(Approximate Time: One 2-hour session)

Once data have been collected, analyzed, and synthesized by reflecting within and gathering input beyond the school, the School and Community Leadership Team summarizes the key learnings, identifies strengths or assets and weaknesses or challenges. Four big conclusions are identified and prioritized using the Big Conclusions Form.

Why four? Why not 3 or 5? A number of key learnings will be identified throughout this process; however, oftentimes several learnings are interconnected to a core root. In addition, schools are more successful when focusing on a few areas and going deep into the implementation, rather than trying to address many issues at a surface level. Limiting the School and Community Leadership Team to four big conclusions focuses attention on root causes resulting in fewer strategies that are achievable.

Root causes are the key! Each big conclusion must reflect a root cause that is actionable by the school and community, not a symptom. Think of unpeeling the layers of an onion back to expose the core. The School and Community Leadership Team continually probes and asks why to get at the root cause of a problem. A Fishbone or Five Whys process can be used to ensure the conclusions reflect causes that could be acted upon. Figure 12 and Table 4 provide a graphic and example using the Five Why's approach. Figures 13 and 14 provide a graphic and example of the Fishbone approach.

Figure 12. 5 Whys Root Cause Analysis



Table 4. Example Root Cause Using Five Whys¹¹

EXAMPLE 5 Whys ROOT CAUSE	
Problem Statement: Low student math performance in seventh grade.	
Why	<i>Students aren't learning and applying math concepts.</i>
Why	<i>Math teachers lack instructional strategies and pedagogy to provide adequate instruction.</i>
Why	<i>Two teachers are new, and one is a long-term substitute.</i>
Why	<i>There is high teacher turnover at the school.</i>
Why	<i>School culture is not supportive of new staff, and the new induction program is not sufficient.</i>

Figure 13. Fishbone Root Cause Analysis

¹¹ Layland, A., & Corbett, J. (2017). *Utilizing integrated resources to implement the school and district improvement cycle and supports: Guidance for schools, districts, and state education agencies*. The Council of Chief State School Officers.

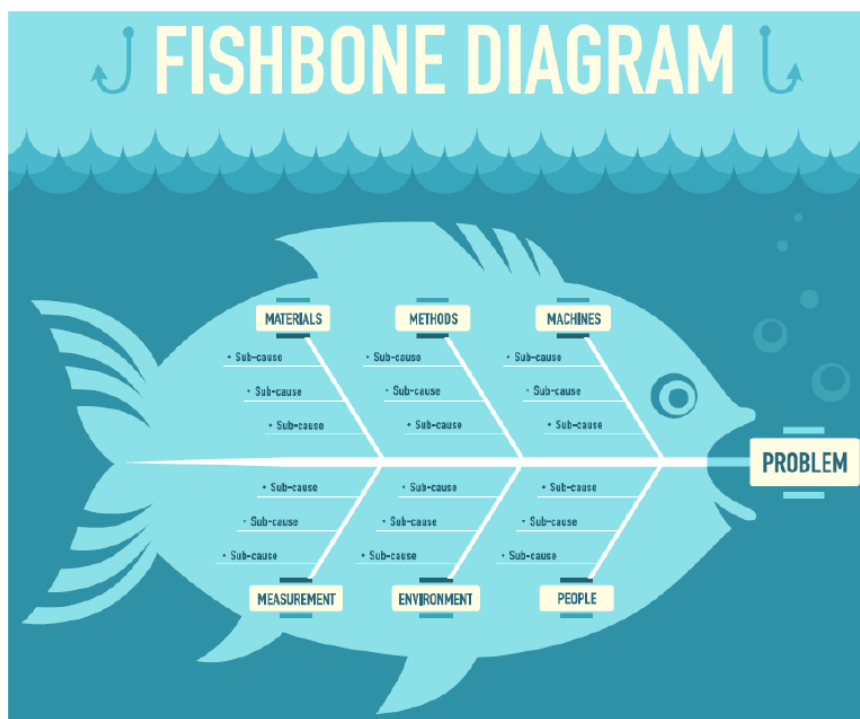
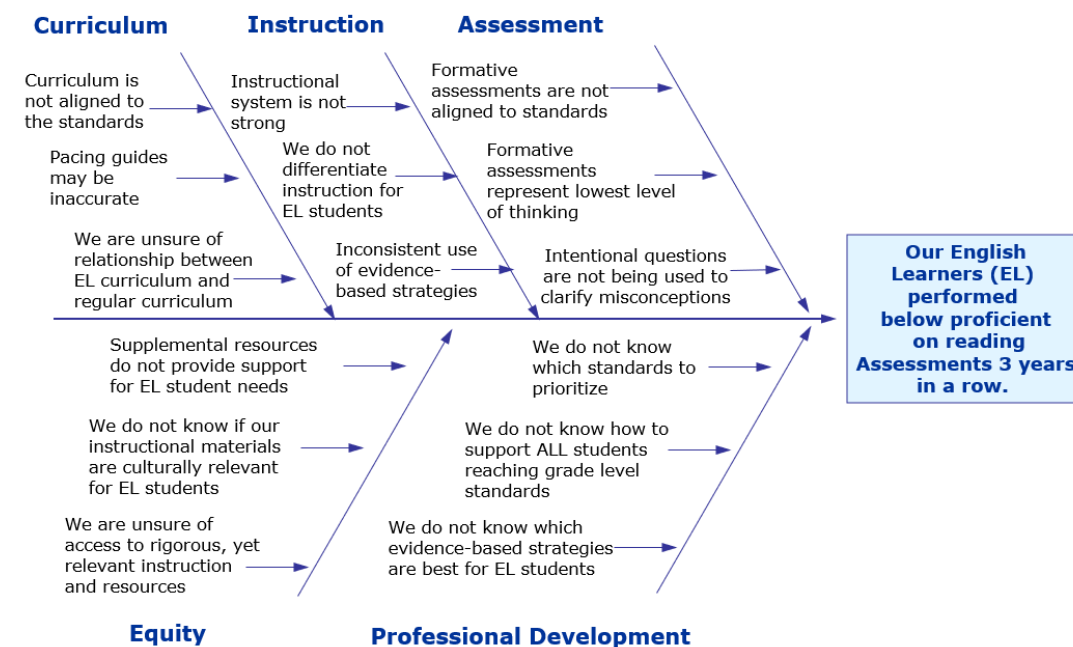


Figure 14. Fishbone Example

Example of Fishbone Root Cause Analysis



Preparation

The school leader provides copies of the completed review forms and key learnings gathered through LOOKING WITHIN and LOOKING BEYOND. The School and Community

Leadership Team considers the following in preparing for the BRINGING IT TOGETHER session:

- What are the data telling us about
 - the students, the school, and the community?
 - the school's instructional system?
 - community needs, engagement, and supports?
- What are the root causes related to key learnings?
- What key learnings rise above others?

Facilitation

The School and Community Leadership Team collected, analyzed, and synthesized data by reflecting within and gathering input beyond the school. Now the School and Community Leadership Team reviews key learnings from **Looking Within** and **Looking Beyond** and identifies assets and challenges that lie within the school and/or community's control. Four big conclusions about student learning, school performance, and community needs, engagement, and supports are then identified and prioritized. The School and Community Leadership Team applies root cause analysis to each conclusion to ensure that the conclusion addresses a root cause, not a symptom. In addition, the Team ensures conclusions are actionable, that is, within the control of the school and community. The conclusions are captured on the Four Big Conclusions Form.



Tool Alert

- *Bringing It Together Meeting Agenda*
- *Four Big Conclusions Form*
- *5 Whys Form*
- *Fishbone Form*

REFLECTION

- 1. *What learnings are most directly related to the school’s instructional system?*
- 2. *What are the community’s greatest assets and challenges?*
- 3. *What 3 or 4 big conclusions could be drawn from all data collected during the review discussions?*
- 4. *What assets could be easily leveraged to address performance?*
- 5. *What challenges are within the influence of the school and community?*
- 6. *How are student voices reflected in the conclusions?*



NOTES

--

BRINGING IT TOGETHER MEETING AGENDA

School: _____

ESSA Designation: _____

Assigned Roles _____

Principal: _____

Date and Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Note Taker: _____

Timekeeper: _____

Process Observer: _____

Team Members			
First Name	Last Name	Position/Role	Present: Yes/No

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)
------	--------------------	-------------	---------------------------------

2 mins	Facilitator	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)	
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Norms (Post Norms visible in meeting room)	
15 mins	Facilitator	Review key learnings from <i>Looking Within and Looking Beyond</i> (Completed Profile, Practice, Program, and Community Review forms)	
80 mins	Facilitator	4 Big Conclusions (Four Big Conclusions Form)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Close the Meeting (Closing routine)	
10 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Due Date
		Complete 4 Big Conclusions Form	
2 min	Facilitator	Next Meeting Reminder (Date and Time)	
5 mins	Process Observer	Process Observation Reflection (Process Observer reports out with specific examples on how the team followed the norms)	
	Facilitator	Adjourn (Close the meeting with agreed upon routine)	

***Action Items Review:** Note taker adds items during the meeting and reviews all action items, with due dates and person(s) responsible at end of meeting.

Post meeting, review the meeting minutes with the note taker. Send the minutes to the School and Community Leadership Team members.

FOUR BIG CONCLUSIONS FORM

The School and Community Leadership Team reviews the completed key learnings from **Looking Within** (Profile Review, Practice Review, and Program Review) and **Looking Beyond** (Community Review) and identifies its top 3 assets and challenges.

After reviewing the **3 top assets and challenges**, the School and Community Leadership Team identifies and prioritizes **FOUR BIG CONCLUSIONS**, *within their control*, that will be addressed in Module 2.

Assets

Using the key learnings, list the **3 greatest assets** of the school and/or community.

Assets	Justification
1.	
2.	
3.	

Challenges

Using the key learnings, list the **3 greatest challenges** that are *within the school and/or community's control* to address.

Challenges	Justification
1.	
2.	
3.	

Big Conclusions

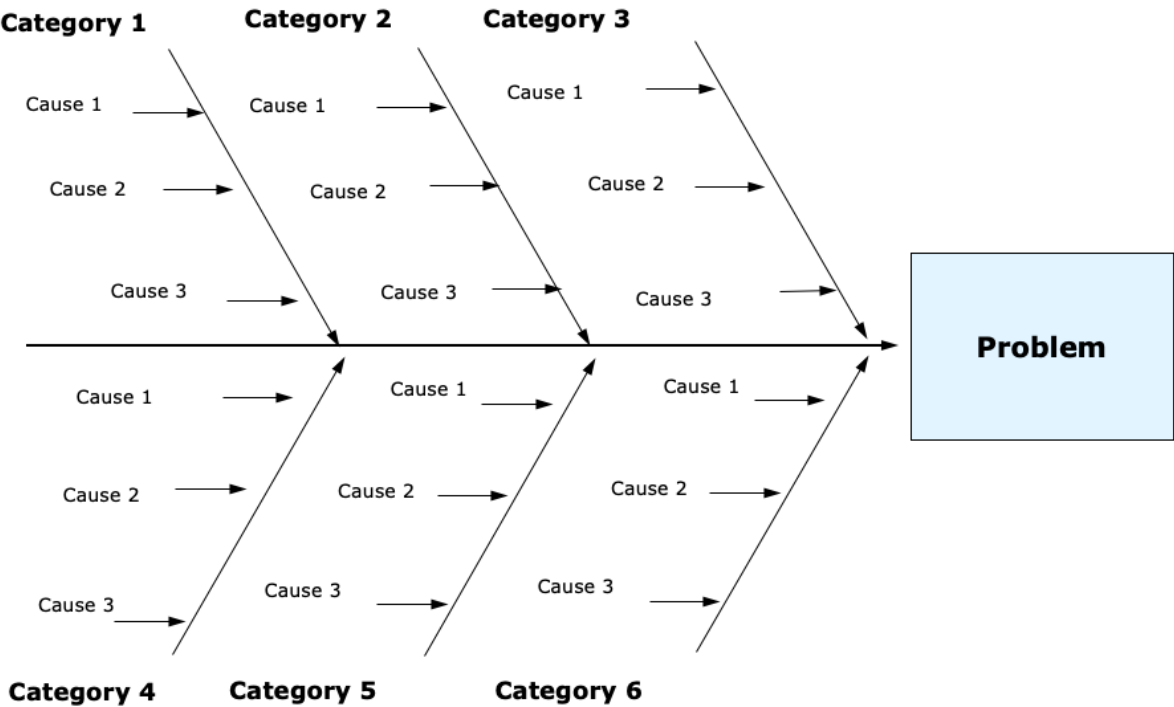
Prioritize **4 BIG CONCLUSIONS** *within the school and/or community's control*.

Big Conclusions	Justification
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

5 Whys Template

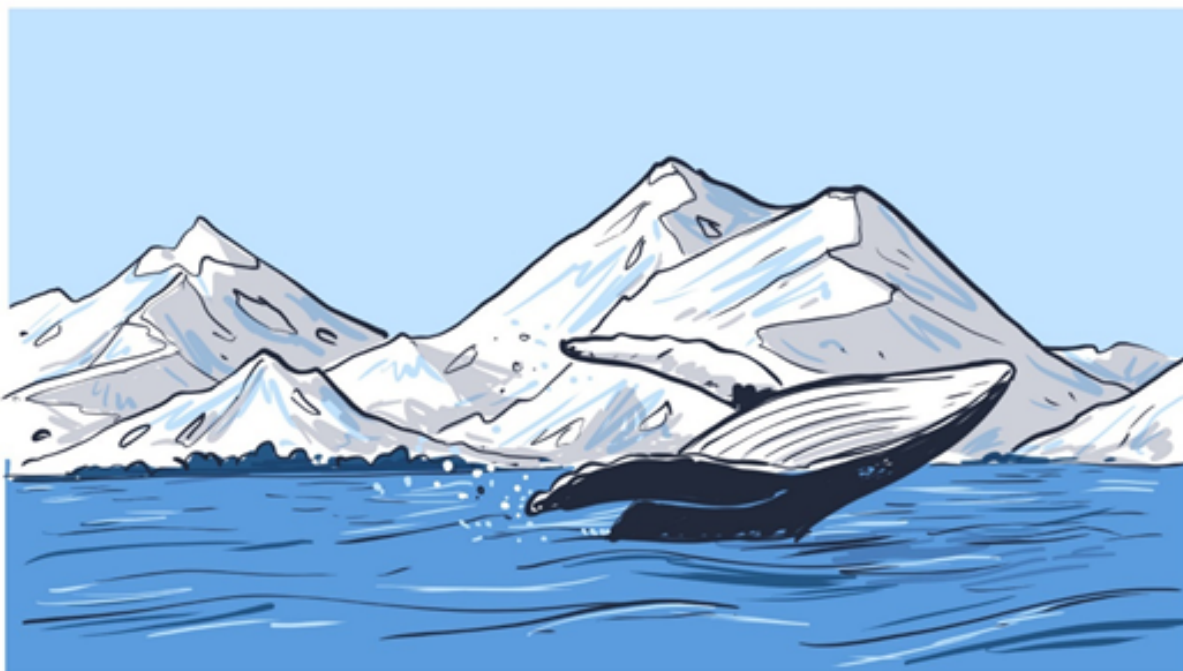
5 Whys ROOT CAUSE	
Problem Statement	
Why	
Why	
Why	
Why	
Why	

Fishbone Root Cause Analysis Template



Module 2: Develop Actionable Plan

(Approximate Time: One 3-hour session or multiple smaller sessions equaling 3 hours)



The School and Community Leadership Team uses the four big conclusions to develop a Successful School Improvement Plan,¹² leveraging assets and addressing challenges to increase performance of students and the school with community support. The Successful School Improvement Plan is a three-year plan, with goals, strategies (effective practices), annual milestones (implementation indicators), and actions/tasks (steps to complete the milestones). The School and Community Leadership Team uses the plan to inform use of federal, state, and local funding to supplement efforts to ensure all work is completed and goals are realized by the end of three years. Annually, the School and Community Leadership Team reports on progress, uses data to adjust the plan as needed, and submits a budget to support implementation the following year.

Successful School Improvement Plan Components

Goals

Goals are aspirational, yet attainable over the course of several years. “The goal must be nothing short of a breakthrough in performance that guarantees that every dollar produces high achievement for all students” (Boser, 2011, p. 2). The School and

¹² Based on Layland, A., & Redding, S. (2020). *Managing performance strategically in education organizations*. Academic Development Institute.

Community Leadership Team should limit the number of goals to no more than four, allowing for deep, meaningful work that will make a significant impact on performance.

Goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timebound (SMART); however, the School and Community Leadership Team need not be constricted to writing one statement representing all elements. A goal, its measures, and strategies provide the specificity, measurement, and relevancy of a SMART goal. The milestones and actions provide specificity, attainability, and timeframe of a SMART goal. Breaking the elements of a SMART goal into plan components avoids the trap of focusing more on getting everything in one perfectly word-smithed statement rather on what you actually want to accomplish through the plan (see Table 5).

Table 5. Goal and Measures Example

Goal 1. Each student will meet his or her growth targets to successfully move to the next school level (elementary, junior or middle school, high school).
Goal Performance Measure <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The percentage of students that meet growth targets each year based on the State assessments using the state growth model.• The percentage of students who move to the next level prepared to succeed based on learning acquisition portfolios.

Strategies

Strategies describe the work the school will undertake in pursuit of its student-focused goals. A strategy should take two to three years to implement and be informed by data and key learnings from the Situational Analysis. A few strategies will go a long way and are likely to be accomplished. Each strategy is composed as a theory of action using an “If...then...and” structure. The “If” of the statement describes or is aligned to the evidence-based practice the school will implement. The “Then” refers to the people directly impacted by the strategy (students, teachers, families, schools, etc.). The final “and” refers back to a goal.

If we (effective practice the district or school will implement) ...then (the direct or short-term impact of the practice on the constituents of the school)...and (impact on student performance expressed as a student-focused goal).

Writing a strategy as a theory of action helps teams:

- Gain a deeper understanding of what we want to do and our anticipated impact,
- Identify what we want to measure,
- Create measures and collect evidence of impact on adult practices AND student learning, and
- Make better decisions on what needs to be continued or stopped.¹³

Table 6. Strategy Examples

¹³ Layland, A., & Redding, S. (2020). *Managing performance strategically in education organizations*. Academic Development Institute.

<p>If we develop standards aligned instruction units and lesson plans that embed evidence-based reading strategies across content, then teachers will plan and deliver instruction supporting reading development, and students will meet their reading growth targets.</p>
<p>If we partner with our community and develop interdisciplinary project-based and place-based learning projects, then teachers and students will engage in meaningful, authentic learning, and students will meet their growth targets in reading, math, and science.</p>
<p>If we develop grade-level guidelines and examples for learning acquisition portfolios, then teachers will facilitate creation of learning acquisition portfolios, and students will demonstrate their learning through portfolios.</p>

Measures are also identified for each strategy focusing on the *then...* component and ending each strategy with a restatement of the goal (and...) ties the goal measures and strategy measures together.

Figure 15. Theory of Action and Measures

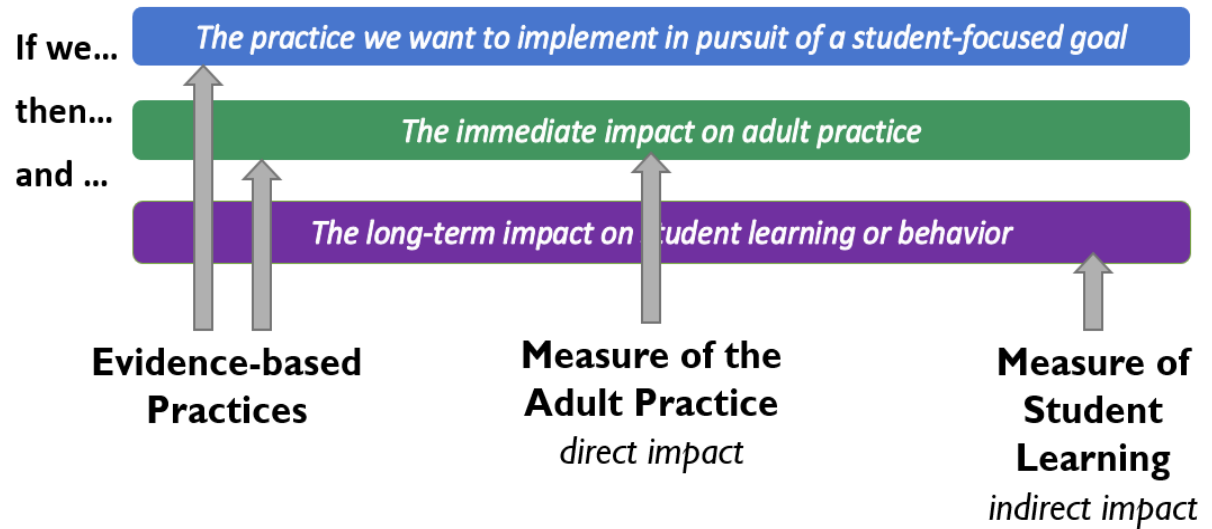


Table 7 provides examples of strategies and measures. The measures are also aligned to domains and indicators in Alaska’s *Four Domains of School Improvement*.¹⁴

Table 7. Strategy and Measures Example

¹⁴ Adapted from Redding, S., McCauley, C., Ryan Jackson, K., & Dunn, L. (2018). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: Indicators of effective practice*. WestEd. And Redding, S., & Corbett, J. (2018). *Shifting school culture to spark rapid improvement: A quick start guide for principals and their teams*. WestEd.

STRATEGY	MEASURE and RELATED DOMAIN/INDICATOR
If we develop standards aligned instruction units and lesson plans that embed evidence-based reading strategies across content, then teachers will plan and deliver instruction supporting reading development , and students will meet their reading growth targets.	<p>85% of teacher lesson plans will include evidence-based reading strategies.</p> <p>Teachers demonstrated delivery of evidence-based reading strategies during 85% of informal walkthroughs.</p> <p>Sc-3B.2: To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards.</p>
If we partner with our community and develop interdisciplinary project-based and place-based learning projects, then teachers and students will engage in meaningful, authentic learning , and students will meet their growth targets in reading, math, and science.	<p>85% of classrooms are participating in one of three school/community project-based and place-based learning projects.</p> <p>Sc-3B.2: To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards.</p>
If we develop grade-level guidelines and examples for learning acquisition portfolios, then teachers will facilitate creation of learning acquisition portfolios , and students will demonstrate their learning through portfolios.	<p>As a result of teacher facilitation, 90% of students have a learning acquisition portfolio demonstrating their learning.</p> <p>Sc-4C.1: Teachers and staff build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.</p>

Milestones

Milestones are large pieces of work to implement strategies. A milestone represents one year's work, so often there are multiple milestones over more than one year to implement a strategy. Milestones are written in past tense, as they represent what you intend to complete at the end of the year. Table 8 provides milestones for the strategies shared in Table 7.

Table 8. Examples of Milestones

STRATEGY	MILESTONE
----------	-----------

If we develop standards aligned instruction units and lesson plans that embed evidence-based reading strategies across content, then teachers will plan and delivery instruction supporting reading development, and students will meet their reading growth targets.	At least 5 standards-aligned units with lesson plans that embed evidence-based reading strategies across content have been developed.
If we partner with our community and develop interdisciplinary project-based and place-based learning projects, then teachers and students will engage in meaningful, authentic learning, and students will meet their growth targets in reading, math, and science.	Two project-based and place-based learning units with lesson plans have been developed and are being implemented.
If we develop grade-level guidelines and examples for learning acquisition portfolios, then teachers will facilitate creation of learning acquisition portfolios, and students will demonstrate their learning through portfolios.	A learning acquisition portfolio with guidelines, examples, and instructions has been developed, and teachers have been trained in facilitation with students.

Actions

Actions are the incremental steps to complete a milestone. A milestone may require multiple actions. For each action, the School and Community Leadership Team needs to consider the resources required, roles and responsibilities of those involved, as well as the timeline needed to accomplish each action.¹⁵ Table 9 provides examples of actions for the milestones we shared above.

Table 9. Action Examples

MILESTONE: At least 5 standards aligned units with lesson plans that embed evidence-based reading strategies across content have been developed.					
Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators

¹⁵ Adapted from Layland, A., & Corbett, J. (2017). *Utilizing integrated resources to implement the school and district improvement cycle and supports: Guidance for schools, districts, and state education agencies*. The Council of Chief State School Officers.

Identify evidence-based reading strategies that are effective in multiple content areas	List of no more than 3 reading strategies	By October	Stipend for faculty	ELA teacher	
Develop a math unit and lesson plans for Grades 1–3	Gr 1–3 math unit with at least one embedded reading strategy	By January	Stipend for faculty	Math lead teacher	
Develop a math unit and lesson plans for Grades 4–6	Gr 4–6 math unit with at least one embedded reading strategy	By January	Stipend for faculty	Math lead teacher	
Develop a science unit and lesson plans for Grades k–2	Gr 1–3 science unit with at least one embedded reading strategy	By March	Stipend for faculty	Science lead teacher	
Develop a science unit and lesson plans for Grades 4–6	Gr 4–6 science unit with at least one embedded reading strategy	By March	Stipend for faculty	Science lead teacher	
Develop a cross disciplinary unit and lesson plans	Cross disciplinary unit with at least one embedded reading strategy	By May	Stipend for faculty	Reading specialist	

MILESTONE: Two project-based and place-based learning units with lesson plans have been developed and are being implemented.

Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators
Identify school/community team to	List of collaborative team members	By October	Stipend for faculty and community members	Principal	

develop project					
Identify and secure resources on how to develop and evaluate project-based and place-based learning	Guidance and examples of project based and place-based learning	By November		Principal	
Identify core problems or issues to be addressed and related learning standards	2 areas of focus with aligned standards	By December	Stipend for faculty and community members	Principal	
Develop project with lessons and resources	1 project with lesson plans, learning assessments, and evaluation of impact	By January	Stipend for faculty and community members	Science lead teacher	
Use project as a model to 2 nd project	An additional project with lesson plans, learning assessments, and evaluation of impact	By March	Stipend for faculty and community members	Science lead teacher	
Plan logistics for implementing projects next school year	Logistics, resources, timelines, communication for projects	By May		School and community leaders	

Preparation

The school leader ensures the School and Community Leadership Team members have a copy of the Four Big Conclusions completed form to review, and consider the following prior to the sessions:

- What are we already doing to address the big conclusions? How can we improve our effectiveness?
- What additional strategies should we engage in?
- What do we need to stop doing to implement the needed strategies effectively?

Each person should also have a copy of the Successful School Improvement Plan form. The meeting room should have a projector so all participants can see the plan being developed as they are working.



Tool Alert

- *Successful School Improvement Plan Meeting Agenda*
- *Successful School Improvement Plan*

Facilitation


The school leader facilitates development of the plan using the Successful School Improvement Plan form. A note taker captures work in the form, clarifying input when needed. Once goals are agreed upon, the School and Community Leadership Team can divide into small groups with each group focusing on a goal. Periodic whole group sharing occurs to check alignment and agreement of goals, strategies, and actions. When completed, the plan is reviewed by all to check coherency, eliminate redundancies, and ensure measures can realistically be used to show progress and results.

School Board Approval

Once the plan has been developed, the School and Community Leadership Team present the plan to the school's board so it can be approved before sending it to district.

REFLECTION

- 1. *What goals are critical to our success over the next three years? What needs to be moved to the back burner so we can really focus on these priorities?*
- 2. *Who needs to be at the table planning with school leaders, faculty, and staff?*
- 3. *What strategies could we accomplish in three years that would move us closer to achieving our goals?*
- 4. *What could we accomplish the first year? The second year? The third year?*
- 5. *How can we measure progress and success?*
- 6. *How can we leverage school and community assets and resources to successfully implement our plan?*
- 7. *What challenges might we run into, and how can we be proactive in planning and addressing the challenges?*

 NOTES

SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN MEETING AGENDA

School: _____

Principal: _____

ESSA Designation: _____

Date and Time: _____

Assigned Roles

Facilitator: _____

Note Taker: _____

Timekeeper: _____

Process Observer: _____

Team Members			
First Name	Last Name	Position/Role	Present: Yes/No

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)	
2 mins	Principal	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)		
2 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)		
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Norms (Post Norms visible in meeting room)		
5 mins	Principal	Review 4 BIG CONCLUSIONS from Four BIG CONCLUSIONS Form		
90 mins	Principal	Develop goals, strategies, and milestones for three years (Successful School Improvement Plan form)		
60 mins	Principal	Develop actions for each milestone. (Successful School Improvement Plan form)		
5 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Completion Date	Person(s) Responsible
		Complete Successful School Improvement Plan		
1 min	Facilitator	Next Meeting Reminder (Date and Time)		
2 mins	Process Observer	Process Observation Reflection (Process Observer reports out with specific examples on how the team followed the norms)		
	Facilitator	Adjourn (Close the meeting with agreed upon routine)		

***Action Items Review:** Note taker adds items during the meeting and reviews all action items, with due dates and person(s) responsible at end of meeting.

Post meeting, review the meeting minutes with the note taker. Send the minutes to the School and Community Leadership Team members.

SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

School Name: _____ Date of Plan: _____ Phone Number: _____
 City: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Principal: _____ Contact Information: _____
 District: _____ Superintendent: _____ District Liaison: _____
 ESSA Designation: _____
 School's Vision: _____
 School's Mission: _____

Goal #							
Measures							
	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline	Target Yr. 1	Target Yr. 2	Target Yr. 3	
1.							
2.							

Strategy #							
Measures							
	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline	Target Yr. 1	Target Yr. 2	Target Yr. 3	
1.							
2.							

Year 1 Milestones and Actions

Milestone: 1.						
Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources/Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators	
1.						
2.						
3.						

Milestone: 2.						
Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources/Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators	
1.						
2.						
3.						

Year 2 Milestones and Actions

Milestone: 1.						
Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources/Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators	
1.						
2.						
3.						

Milestone: 2.						
Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources/Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators	
1.						
2.						
3.						

Year 3 Milestones and Actions

Milestone: 1.						
	Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources/Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators
1.						
2.						
3.						

Milestone: 2.						
	Actions	Anticipated Outputs	Timeline	Resources/Budget	Person Responsible	Collaborators
1.						
2.						
3.						

Year 1 Progress Reporting (To be completed at end of school year)

Goal:

Indicator:	Actual Results:	Comments:
#		
Indicator:	Actual Results:	Comments:
#		

Strategy:

Indicator:	Actual Results:	Comments:
#		
Indicator:	Actual Results:	Comments:
#		

Milestones and Actions

% Milestones Completed

Causes & Adjustments for Year 2:

% Actions Completed

Year 2 Progress Reporting (To be completed at end of school year)

Goal:

Indicator: #

Actual Results:

Comments:

Indicator: #

Actual Results:

Comments:

Strategy:

Indicator: #

Actual Results:

Comments:

Indicator: #

Actual Results:

Comments:

Milestones and Actions

% Milestones Completed

Causes & Adjustments for Year 2:

% Actions Completed

Year 3 Progress Reporting (To be completed at end of school year)

Goal:

Indicator: #	Actual Results:	Comments:
Indicator: #	Actual Results:	Comments:

Strategy:

Indicator: #	Actual Results:	Comments:
Indicator: #	Actual Results:	Comments:

Milestones and Actions

% Milestones Completed	% Actions Completed
Causes & Adjustments for Year 2:	

Module 3: Implement Actionable Plan

(Approximate Time: ongoing)



Fidelity of implementation is critical to the success of any plan. Collaborative teams are needed to accomplish actions, milestones, and strategies, for no one person can do it all! Routines need to be in place to frequently monitor plan implementation. Teams should meet at least monthly to discuss progress, note successes and challenges, identify needed supports, and adjust course as necessary. Continual two-way communication is needed to keep both staff and stakeholders apprised of progress and adjustments.

School and Community Leadership Team should meet quarterly to discuss progress and supports to ensure the plan stays on track. Both implementation (completion of actions and milestones) and results (impact of strategies and progress towards goals) data are collected and reviewed. In addition, annual budget information and plan progress are reported to the district and DEED in order to evaluate the effective use of district and state resources and supports.



Tool Alert

- *Implementation Review Meeting Agenda*

At the end of the third year, the School and Community Leadership Team begins the cycle again with the Situational Analysis and new plan is developed to continue and sustain progress and improvement. Appendix D displays a performance cycle for progress monitoring and reporting of the Successful School Improvement Plan process, and Table 10 displays progress reporting.

Table 10. Progress Reporting Example

Year 1 Progress Reporting (To be completed at end of school year)

Goal: _____

Indicator #:	_____	Actual Results:	_____	Comments:	_____
Indicator #:	_____	Actual Results:	_____	Comments:	_____

Strategy: _____

Indicator #:	_____	Actual Results:	_____	Comments:	_____
Indicator: #	_____	Actual Results:	_____	Comments:	_____

Milestones and Actions


% Milestones Completed:	_____	% Actions Completed:	_____
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Causes & Adjustments for Year 2:

Performance routines and progress reporting are not meant to be punishing. Accountability for the plan is the responsibility of everyone. It is critical that everyone work together to keep themselves and each other accountable for the plan. When an action or milestone is behind schedule, the School and Community Leadership Team, faculty, and the community need to work together to identify the challenges or barriers and supports needed to get the plan back on track. The district and DEED are partners in the success of each school and can be a resource to the School and Community Leadership Team in implementing, monitoring, and reporting progress and results of the plan. Ongoing communication is critical in keeping everyone informed and engaged in implementing the plan so success can be reached.

REFLECTION

- 1. *Are routines in place to report monthly status of actions?*
- 2. *How are data being used to inform needed adjustments and supports?*
- 3. *How are stakeholders routinely being informed of progress or engaged in addressing implementation problems?*
- 4. *How is leadership monitoring and addressing collaborative team issues that arise?*
- 5. *How are district and DEED supports being utilized to support implementation?*
- 6. *How are data being collected and shared on the effectiveness of supports with the district and DEED?*

 NOTES

Time	Person Responsible	Agenda Item	Minutes (Summary of Key Points)
2 mins	Principal	Welcome and Meeting Opening (Opening routine)	
2 mins	Facilitator	Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda (Quick agenda walkthrough)	
2 mins	Process Observer	Review Norms (Post Norms visible in meeting room)	
__ mins	(Insert Name)	Progress Review and Reports	
2 mins	Facilitator	Close the Meeting (Closing routine)	
4 mins	Note Taker	Actions Identified to be Completed*	Due Date
			Person(s) Responsible
1 min	Facilitator	Next Meeting Reminder (Date and Time)	
2 mins	Process Observer	Process Observation Reflection (Process Observer reports out with specific examples on how the team followed the norms)	
	Facilitator	Adjourn (Close the meeting with agreed upon routine)	

***Action Items Review:** Note taker adds items during the meeting and reviews all action items, with due dates and person(s) responsible at end of meeting.

Post meeting, review the meeting minutes with the note taker. Send the minutes to the School and Community Leadership Team members.

Module 4: Reflect, Celebrate, and Share

(Approximate Time: ongoing)



Reflection, celebration, and sharing are essential to continuous school improvement. Each school and community should recognize small as well as large accomplishments and successes. In addition, districts should provide opportunities for schools to share successes and lessons learned to build capacity beyond individual schools.

Opportunities to Reflect

The School and Community Leadership Team meets and reflects on progress throughout each year. It is important to take the time to identify what is working well and what is not working to help refine the communication, coordination, and collaboration to effectively accomplish the school's goals. The School and Community Team can use both formal (e.g., an After Action Review¹⁶) and informal (e.g., unscheduled or scheduled) check-ins to reflect on the plan, work, and progress. District Liaisons or DEED staff can also assist in plan reflections.

¹⁶ After Action Review Guide, After Action Review for Summer Learning, and After Action Review for Learning Recovery are guides developed to facilitate event or project reviews by the National Comprehensive Center and can be accessed at https://www.compcenternetwork.org/resources/library?search_api_fulltext=After

Each reflection opportunity should always be followed by specific action to address challenges or issues with performance. Frequent sharing and problem solving will keep both school and community members informed while also keeping the plan on track.

Opportunities to Celebrate and Share

The School and Community Leadership Team can provide opportunities for celebration at family conferences and community meetings or events. An article could be included in a community newspaper or be sent to the district for inclusion in the district newsletter. Students and families should be included in the celebrating.

Individuals, groups, and leaders all learn through the empowerment process. Sharing experiences with the process and each school's plan will help other schools and communities use the process and playbook for successful school improvement.

Opportunities to share include:

- Connecting with other schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) or targeted support and improvement (TSI),
- Sharing at principal meetings and conferences, or superintendent meetings and conferences,
- Spotlighting success in school, district, or state education newsletters, or
- Sharing at a State Board of Education meeting.

School and community members may know of or create other opportunities to reflect, celebrate, and share. We have included communication and sharing tools that teams can use to spread the news of their great work in improving each student's learning experiences and success.




Tool Alert

- *Communication Guidance and Tips*
- *Communication Plan Form*

REFLECTION

- 1. *What is important to share during and at the end of each school year?*
- 2. *Who are the key audiences to receive our messages?*
- 3. *How often and by what modes would be most effective for our messaging?*
- 4. *In what ways can the school and community work together to inform our broader community?*
- 5. *How can we contribute to the broader education community throughout Alaska?*

<div>NOTES </div>

COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE AND TIPS

1. Keep communications simple by using clear, concise, and non-educational jargon.
2. Provide timely information related to the Successful School Improvement Plan.
3. Make key information available to all stakeholders and translate communication pieces when appropriate for specific language groups.
4. Vary the types and level of communication to target diverse audiences.
5. Communicate early and often, and face-to-face when possible. The more difficult the situation, the more important it is to communicate face-to-face.
6. Keep written communications brief and to the point and remember to use bullet points when appropriate and proofread all documents.
7. Use email to communicate with faculty but be cognizant that not all faculty may have consistent access to the internet. When sending emails, use the email function that asks for a “Read Receipt,” to help identify what faculty member did not receive the email.
8. Use direct mail; however, keep in mind that timeliness may become an issue.
9. Use online meeting platforms, as appropriate. Select a platform that meets the school’s safety requirements and is compatible with the school’s technology devices. Training will need to be provided to ensure all parties are confident in using the selected meeting platform.
10. Encourage team members to relay messages through personal interaction when appropriate.

Communication Planning Tool

List how information is currently shared and received between the school and community.	
SHARED	RECEIVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the communication systems above that work best.	

List barriers to sending and receiving information between the school and community.	
SENDING	RECEIVING
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the barriers that are within the control of the School and Community Leadership Team.	

List the types of information the School and Community Leadership Team will most likely share.
--

Identify the target audience and the communication mode to best use for information dissemination.	
TARGET AUDIENCE	COMMUNICATION MODE

Identify the two best INTERNAL communication modes for the School and Community Leadership Team to share information and materials.	
Best Modes to Share Information	Best Modes to Share Materials

Use this completed tool to develop the School and Community Leadership Team Communication Plan.

Internal

Primary Audiences	Responsible Person	Tailored Messages	Method	Materials/Resources	Timeline

External

Primary Audiences	Responsible Person	Tailored Messages	Method	Materials/Resources	Timeline

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Actions	Actions are the incremental steps to complete a milestone.
Evidence-Based Practices	Skills, techniques, and strategies that have been proven to work through experimental research studies or large-scale research field studies. The practice has strong, moderate, or promising evidence according to the definitions outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 by the U.S. Department of Education (2016).
Faculty	All personnel employed by the local school.
Goal	An ambitious, usually aspirational, outcome of the organization's pursuit of its vision and mission. Goals represent the ultimate, desired state of the organization in relation to its clients and may not be restricted by time. "What are you trying to do?"
Indicator	The measurement element of a performance measure used to determine progress in implementing a goal or strategy.
Milestone	An incremental step in implementing a strategy, usually a year in duration. A milestone may also be referred to as an objective and is typically non-quantitative and descriptive. Milestones are written in past tense, indicating what is anticipated to be completed at the end of one year. Milestones are markers on the road to get to the endpoint successfully. It should be an accomplishment that demonstrates that the strategy is on track.
Mission	A statement of an organization's purpose. It describes what the organization does and for whom to realize its vision. A specific purpose or task with which a person, group, or organization is charged.
Outcome	The impact, consequence, development, or conclusion of a series of actions, a milestone, strategy, or goal.
Output	The concrete product, material, or service that is the result of an action.
Performance Measure	A data-supported measure toward the completion of a goal over time.
Process	In the context of workflow, a series of actions or steps in order to achieve a particular end.
Productivity	Working with optimum efficiency and effectiveness to complete actions, milestones, and strategies, and more closely approximate goals.
School and Community Leadership Team (aka School Leadership Team)	A School and Community Leadership Team is comprised of, but not limited to, school leaders, community leaders, faculty and staff representatives, family representatives, and students as appropriate, that meets routinely to engage in continuous improvement.
Staff	All non-certificated employees.
Strategic Planning	Activities calculated to achieve a set of goals in a dynamic, competitive environment.

Term	Definition
Strategies	A deliberate and coordinated set of activities that is designed to help you achieve one or more of your outcome goals. Strategies tell how an organization gets from the current situation to the ideal state represented by the vision. A strategy is written as a theory of action.
Successful School Improvement Plan	A plan that leverages strengths and addresses challenges to increase performance of students and the school with community support. The Successful School Improvement Plan is a three-year plan, with goals (student-focused), strategies (effective practices), annual milestones (implementation indicators), and actions/tasks (steps to complete the milestones). The plan informs how the school will utilize its Federal, State, and local funding to ensure all work is completed and goals are realized by the end of three years.
Target	Translate a goal into a numerical commitment that is specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic, and time-bound (SMART). A specific goal to be achieved.
Theory of Action	A delivery model for change that connects goals and objectives to specific strategies and outcome measures. It is a linkage of strategies to their outcomes in the goals. “If this... then this...and” A theme or set of themes that serve as overall guide rails for the set of adopted strategies.
Vision	A brief statement describing an ideal form, based on goals and aspirations, illustrating an organization at its best and the greater good it serves.

Common Acronym List

Acronym	Meaning
ADI	Academic Development Institute
AESA	Association of Education Service Agencies
AI/AN	American Indian and Alaska Native
CSI	Comprehensive Support and Improvement
CoP	Community of Practice
CST	Center for School Turnaround
DEED	Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
EB	Evidence Based
EBP	Evidence Based Practice
ED	U.S. Department of Education
ES	Empowerment Specialist
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
EWDS	Early Warning Data System
GMS	Grants Management System
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LEA	Local Education Agency
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Support
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
PLC	Professional Learning Community
R16CC	Region 16 Comprehensive Center
REA	Regional Education Agencies
REL	Regional Education Laboratory
RTI	Response to Intervention
Sc	Abbreviation for school in the Indicators
SCLT	School and Community Leadership Team
SEA	State Education Agency
SERRC	Alaska's Educational Resource Center
SI	School Improvement
SoR	Science of Reading
TA	Technical Assistance
TSI	Targeted Support and Improvement

Appendices

Appendix A. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Four Domains for School Improvement

Appendix B. Crosswalk: Alaska's Education Challenge, DEED's Four Domains for School Improvement, and STEPP Indicators

Appendix C. Successful School Improvement Plan Performance Cycle

Appendix D. Roles and Responsibilities in Supporting Successful School Improvement

Appendix A. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Four Domains for School Improvement



Four Domains of School Improvement¹⁷

DEED's Four Domains of School Improvement lists evidence-based practices that research has indicated are critical to improving a school's performance and student success. The indicators were adapted from *Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: Indicators of Effective Practice* and *Shifting School Culture to Spark Rapid Improvement: A Quick Start Guide for Principals and Their Teams*, both pivotal publications on school improvement from the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd in 2018. School Leaders are encouraged to use the practices in their improvement efforts.

Domain 1: Transformational Leadership	
Practice 1A. Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency	
Indicator	Description
Sc1A.0:	School Leader establishes a School and Community Leadership Team comprised of, but not limited to, school leaders, community leaders, teachers and staff representatives, family representatives, and students as appropriate that meets routinely to engage in continuous improvement.
Sc1A.1:	School and Community Leadership Team sets a clear direction for the school with a stated vision, theory of action, goals, and strategies for rapid and sustained improvement.
Sc1A.2:	School and Community Leadership Team itemizes and appropriately distributes leadership functions among teachers.
Sc1A.3:	Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by School and Community Leadership Team, are used to routinely share improvement priorities across teachers and staff, with students, and with the school's broader community.
Practice 1B: Monitor short- and long-term goals	
Indicator	Description
Sc-1B.1:	School Leadership Team sets student-outcome goals with baseline and student-centered performance measures informed by various forms of assessment.

¹⁷ Adapted from Redding, S., McCauley, C., Ryan Jackson, K., & Dunn, L. (2018). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: Indicators of effective practice*. WestEd. And Redding, S., & Corbett, J. (2018). *Shifting school culture to spark rapid improvement: A quick start guide for principals and their teams*. WestEd.

Sc-1B.2:	School Leadership Team establishes and monitors implementation of an improvement plan that is aligned with the school's direction and includes implementation milestones, actions, and annual measures.
Sc-1B.3:	Improvement plan includes necessary changes in personnel, programs, and professional practice as determined by needs assessment (situational analysis).
Sc-1B.4:	School Leadership Team monitors and adjusts implementation of the improvement plan through regular (typically monthly) review of progress toward goal-aligned milestones, actions, and annual measures.
Sc-1B.5:	School Leadership Team provides and responds to regular (typically quarterly) feedback on progress toward goal-aligned implementation milestones, actions, and annual measures.
Practice 1C: Customize and target support to meet needs	
Indicator	Description
Sc-1C.1:	School Leadership Team assesses needs at the school, grade, and individual level and identifies three to five key priorities as part of a school improvement plan.
Sc-1C.2:	School Leadership Team requests and receives flexibility from the district and/or state around identified areas (e.g., flexibility in hiring staff, school calendars, or use of funds) and offers data as rationale for the requests.
Sc-1C.3:	School Leadership Team plans and implements improvement strategies that are focused on student learning needs.
Sc-1C.4:	School Leadership Team plans and implements strategies tailored to address the professional learning needs of individual teachers and staff.
Domain 2: Talent Development	
Practice 2A. Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent	
Indicator	Description
Sc-2A.1:	School Leadership Team engages school personnel and the community to identify the unique context of their school and uses this information to determine the priority competencies for teachers, staff, and leaders.
Sc-2A.2:	School leaders recommend for hire teachers, staff, and leaders from a talent pool identified by the school or district to ensure teachers, staff, and leaders are well matched to school needs.
Sc-2A.3:	Teachers, staff, and leaders are engaged in professional learning opportunities that develop and sustain effective practices to succeed in school improvement and the community.

Practice 2B: Target professional learning opportunities	
Indicator	Description
Sc-2B.1:	School Leadership Team meets at least quarterly to review data to inform professional learning opportunities for teachers and staff then make recommendations in rapid response to identified needs, as aligned with the school's improvement priorities.
Sc-2B.2:	School Leadership Team engages in learning opportunities <i>with</i> teachers and staff to learn together and reflects <i>with</i> them on professional practice (e.g., coaching, mentoring, observation).
Sc-2B.3:	School Leadership Team seeks out, and provides access to, professional learning opportunities that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality to benefit teachers and staff both individually and collectively.
Practice 2C: Set clear performance expectations	
Indicator	Description
Sc-2C.1:	School Leadership Team provides clear written expectations for teachers, staff, and leaders in terms of roles, effort, and expected outcomes.
Sc-2C.2:	School Leadership Team develops and implements schedules to reflect effective use of teacher and staff time, including time for teacher and staff collaboration, professional learning, and review of student data.
Sc-2C.3:	School Leadership Team examines, at least once a semester, teacher, staff, and leader role descriptions and commitments so that responsibilities can be equitably distributed.
Domain 3: Instructional Transformation	
Practice 3A. Diagnose and respond to student learning needs	
Indicator	Description
Sc-3A.1:	School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet regularly (at least monthly) to review implementation data (e.g., documentation from walkthroughs, practice fidelity, training, coaching) and student data (academic and socio-behavioral) for all students as well as subgroups and individual students.
Sc-3A.2:	School Leadership Team works with the district and state to secure needed resources for instructional improvement.
Sc-3A.3:	School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need.
Practice 3B: Provide rigorous evidence-based instruction	
Indicator	Description

Sc-3B.1:	School Leadership Team provides a menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards to teachers and staff for meeting student needs.
Sc-3B.2:	To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards.
Sc-3B.3:	Teachers and staff receive initial and ongoing training in using evidence-based instructional practices, with opportunity to practice the skills in the training.
Sc-3B.4:	School Leadership Team ensures that all students are taught with evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards and are differentiated to meet their individual needs.

Practice 3C: Remove barriers and provide opportunities

Indicator	Description
Sc-3C.1:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet monthly to use an Early Warning Data System or another early identification process to identify specific students in need of support, remove barriers, and fulfill unmet needs of identified students.
Sc-3C.2:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.
Sc-3C.3:	School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.

Domain 4: Culture of Learning

Practice 4A. Build a strong community intensely focused on student learning

Indicator	Description
Sc-4A.1:	All school leaders, teachers, and staff are organized into teams with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.
Sc-4A.2:	School Leadership Team or other identified team oversees school-home relationships that enhance student learning and operates with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.
Sc-4A.3:	School Leadership Team clearly defines, documents, and annually reviews roles, responsibilities, and expectations relative to students' learning for administrators, teachers, families, staff, volunteers, and students.
Sc-4A.4:	School promotes, recognizes, and celebrates growth and success in school rituals and routines, such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and classroom wall displays, and student competitions.

Sc-4A.5:	School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.
Practice 4B: Solicit and act upon stakeholder input	
Indicator	Description
Sc-4B.1:	School Leadership Team annually conducts a survey of teachers and staff, families, students, and community to gauge perceptions about the school, its effectiveness, and their place in it.
Sc-4B.2:	School Leadership Team annually releases to the school community a report of its analysis of survey results, including concrete actions it plans in response to the analysis.
Sc-4B.3:	School Leadership Team annually convenes meetings of teachers and staff, students, student families, and community members to review and discuss the report of its analysis of survey results.
Practice 4C: Engage students and families in pursuing education goals	
Indicator	Description
Sc-4C.1:	Teachers and staff build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.
Sc-4C.2:	Teachers and staff help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.
Sc-4C.3:	Teachers and staff help students and their families formulate education goals and understand and use a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.
Practice 4D: Build from the strengths of diverse cultures and individual students' potential (Responsiveness)	
Indicator	Description
Sc-4D. 1	The school or district provides school faculty and staff with training and support to understand their own and their students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
Sc-4D. 2	The school or district provides faculty and staff with training and support to avoid stereotyping of students based on assumptions and biases.
Sc-4D. 3	The school or district provides professional development for faculty on how to integrate cultural and linguistic material into the curriculum.
Sc-4D. 4	The school plans ways to infuse place-based customs and values into the school's operating procedures, rituals, and activities.
Sc-4D. 5	The school includes community representatives from different cultural backgrounds in planning and providing school events that feature culture, customs, and values.
Sc-4D. 6	The school ensures that the promotion of the history, culture, customs, and values of culturally distinct groups is done in a way that engenders respect for the history, culture, customs, and values of other groups.

Appendix B. Crosswalk: Alaska’s Education Challenge, DEED’s Four Domains for School Improvement, and STEPP Indicators

Alaska’s Education Challenge Prioritized Strategies	Four Domains for School Improvement Domain: District level		Alaska STEPP District Level Domain School Level Domain/Indicator	
	Domain: District level		Domain/Indicator	
Prioritize early reading in all elementary schools, including K–12 schools	DL-1C.1: District provides intensive and tailored support to identified school-level priorities that are informed by root-cause analysis and school-level needs assessments.	Sc-1C.1: School Leadership Team assesses needs at the school, grade, and individual level and identifies three to five key priorities as part of a school improvement or empowerment plan.		
Adopt and implement effective reading programs and materials	DL-3B.2: District provides training for district and school staff on the selection and use of evidence-based instructional practices. DL-4A.1: District policy includes description of required structures, purposes, meeting times, and work products for both district and school teams that focus on improving practice to enhance student learning.	Sc-3B.1: School Leadership Team provides a menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards to teachers and staff for meeting student needs. Sc-3B.2: To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards.		3.3 School staff use research-based instructional practices, programs, and materials.
Incentivize districts to adopt and implement effective curriculum and teaching strategies				
Adopt 60- or 90-minute reading blocks in grades K–3 models, including movement through individual grades				
Support all students to read at grade level by end of third grade				

Encourage district review of different K–3 models, including movement through individual grades				Domain 6.0 – There is evidence that administrative leaders focus on improving student achievement.	2.4 School staff use multiple data sources, including state assessment data, to evaluate how school programs impact student performance including specific sub-groups and specific grade levels.
	Create and disseminate materials for parents and community members on how they can support the development of their children's reading skills	Sc-1A.3: Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by school leadership, are used to routinely share improvement priorities across faculty and staff, with students, and with the school's broader community.			4.7 School staff communicate effectively with parents about learning expectations, student progress, and reinforcing learning at home; staff implement effective strategies to increase parent engagement. 6.6 Instructional leaders consistently build productive, respectful relationships with parents and community members regarding school programs and school improvement efforts.
	Provide consistent, ongoing professional development for educators and community members on the effective use of adopted reading curricula	DL-2B.1: District policy specifies that each school will regularly examine and annually report on how it is using data to identify professional learning needs of each teacher and using these data to rapidly respond with professional learning opportunities aligned with	Sc-1C.3: School plans and implements improvement strategies that are focused on student learning needs.	Domain 5.0 – There is evidence that professional development is based on data and reflects the needs of students, schools, and the district.	5.3 School staff embed professional development into daily routines and practices.

	the school's turnaround priorities.				2.3 School staff use universal screening assessments and routinely administer them multiple times a year in at least literacy and math. 3.4 School staff consistently, and regularly measure the effectiveness of instruction using data from a variety of formative assessments.
Implement effective early screeners in K–3				Domain 2.0 – There is evidence that assessment of student learning is frequent, rigorous, and aligned with Alaska's Content Standards.	
Train teachers on state standards and on how to align instruction to these standards	DI-3B.3: District facilitates ongoing updates by district/school teams to documents that are used by teachers in instructional planning and that vertically align standards and curriculum.	Sc-3B.1: School Leadership Team provides a menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards to teachers and staff for meeting student needs. Sc-3B.3: Teachers and staff receive initial and ongoing training in using evidence-based instructional practices, with opportunity to practice the skills in the training.	Domain 1.0 – There is evidence that the district-approved curricula are aligned, implemented, and used in conjunction with the local and Alaska Content Standards.	3.1 School staff use a system to plan instructional practice and programs that are aligned with Alaska Content Standards. 6.4 Instructional leaders ensure that teachers have access to and are implementing Alaska Content Standards.	
Assist school leaders in using data and classroom walkthroughs to ensure implementation of aligned curricula	DI-1C.2: District regularly monitors each school's implementation of improvement and turnaround plans and has procedures for responding in a timely manner to deviations from expected progress toward milestones.	Sc-2B.1: School Leadership Team meets at least quarterly to review data to inform professional learning opportunities for teachers and staff then make recommendations in rapid response to identified needs, as aligned with the school's improvement priorities.	Domain 6.0 – There is evidence that administrative leaders focus on improving student achievement.	2.2 School staff use established systems for collecting, managing, analyzing, and accessing data. 6.6 Instructional leaders conduct formal and informal observations and provide timely	

			Sc-3A.1: School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet regularly (at least monthly) to review implementation data (e.g., documentation from walkthroughs, practice fidelity, training, coaching) and student data (academic and socio-behavioral) for all students as well as subgroups and individual students.			feedback to staff members about their instructional practices.
Use valid and reliable formative assessments to monitor students' progress			Sc-3A.3: School teams (e.g., School Leadership Team, grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need.	Domain 2.0 – There is evidence that assessment of student learning is frequent, rigorous, and aligned with Alaska's Content Standards.	2.1 School staff use formative and summative assessments that are aligned with district approved curricula and Alaska Content Standards. 6.2 Instructional leaders regularly assist teachers in understanding the data from various student assessments to improve instruction. 6.8 Instructional leader regularly analyzes assessment and other data, and uses the results in planning for the improved achievement of all students.	
Identify and implement effective interventions for struggling readers	DI-3B.1: District provides school teams with tools any coaching needed to select and operationalize evidence-based instructional practices	Sc-2C.3: School Leadership Team examines, at least once a semester, teacher, staff, and leader role descriptions and commitments so that		Domain 3.0 – There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all	3.2 School staff implement a coherent, documented plan throughout the school to ensure that all students	

	that meet the needs of their school's students. DL-3C.1: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching to school personnel on the district adopted early warning data system and related protocol.	responsibilities can be equitably distributed. Sc-3B.2: To meet student needs, teachers and staff use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address the state standards. Sc-3B.4: School Leadership Team ensures that all students are taught with evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards and are differentiated to meet their individual needs.	classrooms to meet the needs of each student.	receive core instruction, and all low-performing students receive additional support to help them meet or exceed the state content standards.
Inform and train educators, parents, and community members on how to understand reading data and on how it can be used to support students in their reading skills attainment		Sc-4A.2: School Leadership Team or other identified team oversees school-home relationships that enhance student learning and operates with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products. Sc-4A.5: School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.	Domain 5.0 – There is evidence that professional development is based on data and reflects the needs of students, schools, and the district.	5.1 School staff use multiple sources of student assessment data as a primary factor in determining professional development priorities.
Establish voluntary district reporting to the state on K–3 reading measures				

Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs					
Expand high-quality CTE courses and programs of study					
Foster collaboration between districts to create innovative and relevant experiences for students	DL-1C.3: District provides information and opportunities for schools (e.g., principals, staff, or leadership teams) to learn lessons derived from school improvement implementation across schools, including alongside and from one another.				
Establish partnerships among local industry, districts, and the state					
Increase awareness of the positive benefits of CTE for student engagement and academic success					
Create opportunities for local and state partners to increase opportunities for students					
Promote dialogue among local and state partners to increase opportunities for students					4.8 School priorities, goals, plans, and events are collaboratively developed by school staff members, parents, students, and community members, and these plans are communicated to all stakeholders by school staff.
Advance CTE educator professional development					

	through partnerships and collaboration					
	Encourage community involvement in CTE program development					
	Support district exploration of diverse high school models such as distance delivery education in high school and access to off-site opportunities such as regional high schools, career and technical schools, and supported intern programs	DL-3A.2: District provides and supports learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers to design and implement flexible schedules and extended instructional opportunities to meet student needs.		Domain 3.0 – There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms to meet the needs of each student.		
	Provide industry more opportunities for input in career pathway curriculum					
Close the achievement gap by	Provide evidence-based strategies and resources for teachers on implementing standards-aligned and student-centered instruction and curricula for preschool through grade 12	DL-3A.1: District policy includes protocols and decision rules for schools to use in the design of instructional groupings for students. DL-4A.1: District policy includes description of required structures, purposes, meeting times, and work	Sc-1C.3: School Leadership Team plans and implements improvement strategies that are focused on student learning needs. Sc-3B.1: School Leadership Team provides a menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately address	Domain 1.0 – There is evidence that the district-approved curricula are aligned, implemented, and used in conjunction with the local and Alaska Content Standards.	1.1 School staff implements the district approved, research-based curricula that are aligned with Alaska Content Standards.	

		products for both district and school teams that focus on improving practice to enhance student learning.	the state standards to teachers and staff for meeting student needs. Sc-3B.3: Teachers and staff receive initial and ongoing training in using evidence-based instructional practices, with opportunity to practice the skills in the training. Sc-3B.4: School Leadership Team ensures that all students are taught with evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards and are differentiated to meet their individual needs.		
Institute instructional models that promote deeper hands-on learning (for example, CTE/STEM)	<p>DL-3B.2: District provides training for district and school staff on the selection and use of evidence-based instructional practices.</p> <p>DL-4C.2: District provides professional learning opportunities for all school leaders and teachers to infuse instruction with activities that help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.</p>	<p>DL-3B.2: District provides training for district and school staff on the selection and use of evidence-based instructional practices.</p> <p>DL-4C.2: District provides professional learning opportunities for all school leaders and teachers to infuse instruction with activities that help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.</p>		Domain 3.0 – There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms to meet the needs of each student.	
Implement supportive strategies that boost attendance for all students	DL-3C.1: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching to school personnel on the district adopted early warning data system and related protocol.	<p>DL-3C.1: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching to school personnel on the district adopted early warning data system and related protocol.</p> <p>Sc-4C.1: Teachers and staff build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.</p> <p>Sc-4C.2: Teachers and staff help students explore possibilities,</p>	Sc-4C.1: Teachers and staff build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery. Sc-4C.2: Teachers and staff help students explore possibilities,		

	and measures for identifying success, mitigating underperformance, and accelerating student learning	meeting times, and work products for both district and school teams that focus on improving practice to enhance student learning.	leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.	frequent, rigorous, and aligned with Alaska's Content Standards.	students and cultures, and they reflect an understanding of the cultural values of the students and community.
	Engage in regular consultation with stakeholders who represent the full range of cultures, languages, geographical locations, resources, abilities, interests, and goals of our students	DI-1A.3: District leadership convenes public forums and invites stakeholders, including parents and neighborhood leaders, to inform context, policy, equitable resource distribution, and implementation of turnaround efforts.	Sc-1A.3: Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by School Leadership Team, are used to routinely share improvement priorities across teachers and staff, with students and with the school's broader community.		4.7 School staff communicate effectively with parents about learning expectations, student progress, and reinforcing learning at home; staff implement effective strategies to increase parent engagement.
	Establish legislation for a tribal compacting and/or charting compact that outlines the authority, accountability, and fiscal responsibility of the tribal entities and the State of Alaska to carry out agreed-upon educational services for K-12 students				
	Align school improvement, accountability, and standards			Domain 1.0 – There is evidence that the district-approved curricula are aligned, implemented, and used in conjunction with the local and Alaska Content Standards.	1.4 School staff use a variety of assessment data to systematically review and identify gaps in the curricula.
	Align instruction, curriculum, standards, student success			Domain 1.0 – There is evidence that the district-approved	1.5 School staff systematically use a review process to

	expectations, and assessments				curricula are aligned, implemented, and used in conjunction with the local and Alaska Content Standards.	determine if the curricula address the learning needs of all students. 3.5 School staff hold high academic expectations for students learning and communicate them to students so that students understand what is needed to meet or exceed the state content standards.
	Reconsider current education funding connected to seat time; redefine instruction and hour			Sc-1C.2: School Leadership Team requests and receives flexibility from the district and/or state around identified areas (e.g., flexibility in hiring staff, school calendars, or use of funds) and offers data as rationale for the requests.		4.5 School staff provide extended learning opportunities, and students in need of additional support regularly participate.
	Promote cross-district partnerships and sharing of resources, such as courses, materials, professional development, guidance documents, and forms	DI-1C.3 District provides information and opportunities for schools (e.g., principals, staff or leadership teams) to learn lessons derived from school improvement implementation across schools, including alongside and from one another.	Sc-2B.2: School Leadership Team engages in learning opportunities <i>with</i> teachers and staff to learn together and reflects <i>with</i> them on professional practice (e.g., coaching, mentoring, observation).			
	Fund correspondence students at the same level as non-correspondence students					

Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals					
Increase the number of districts offering an Educators Rising program	DI-2A.4: District provides school leadership in lowest-performing schools with defined, increased authority in appropriate talent-development areas (e.g., teacher hiring).				
Support Alaska's educator preparation programs through accreditation and partnerships	DI-2B.3: District provides or supports, evaluates, and continuously improves professional learning opportunities for district and school personnel that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality.	Sc-2A.2: School leaders recommend for hire teachers, staff, and leaders from a talent pool identified by the school or district to ensure teachers, staff, and leaders are well matched to school needs.			
Provide induction programs for educators new to Alaska and/or the profession		Sc-2B.2: School Leadership Team engages in learning opportunities <i>with</i> teachers and staff to learn together and reflects <i>with</i> them on professional practice (e.g., coaching, mentoring, observation).		5.4 Instructional leaders coordinate mentoring to support all new teachers in the development of instructional and classroom management skills.	
Reimagine Alaska studies and multicultural curriculum requirements through the lens of cultural literacy					
Add supports for new and veteran administrators	DI-2B.2: District offers all district staff high-quality, relevant, and job-embedded professional learning opportunities, including some opportunities to engage in the professional learning with school leaders and teachers.	Sc-2A.3: Teachers, staff, and leaders are engaged in professional learning opportunities that develop and sustain effective practices to succeed in school improvement and the community.	Domain 5.0 – There is evidence that professional development is based on data and reflects the needs of students, schools, and the district	5.5 Sufficient time and resources are allocated to support professional development outlined in the school improvement plan.	
Develop micro-credentialing		Sc-2A.3: Teachers, staff, and leaders are engaged in	Domain 5.0 – There is evidence that		

	opportunities for educators in high-impact areas such as cultural literacy, trauma-informed instruction, STEM, Alaska's English language arts and math standards, and text analysis		professional learning opportunities that develop and sustain effective practices to succeed in school improvement and the community.	professional development is based on data and reflects the needs of students, schools, and the district	
	Emphasize support and professional growth through district educator evaluation systems	DI-2A.3: District uses multiple measures and data sources to assess teacher and leader turnaround competencies, with special attention to readiness and potential, and uses these tools to identify and develop teachers and leaders to serve in turnaround contexts.	Sc-2A.1: School Leadership Team engages school personnel and the community to identify the unique context of their school and uses this information to determine the priority competencies for teachers, staff, and leaders.	Domain 5.0 – There is evidence that professional development is based on data and reflects the needs of students, schools, and the district.	
	Continue to recognize and utilize Alaska's master educators (for example: National Board-Certified Educators)	DI-2A.2: District policies, programs, and procedures include those for identifying and developing turnaround talent.	Sc-2B.3: School Leadership Team seeks out, and provides access to, professional learning opportunities that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality to benefit teachers and staff both individually and collectively.		
	Create an Educator Preparation Standards Board for licensing				
Improve the	Create sustainable and positive school climates that are safe, supportive, and engaging for all	DI-3C.4: District uses data collected by schools that are using the early warning system and the menu of	Sc-3C.2: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives	Domain 4.0 – There is evidence that school culture and climate provide a safe, orderly	4.1 School staff use effective classroom management strategies that maximize

	students, staff, and communities	<p>community and social services and stakeholder surveys to measure effectiveness (defined as fulfilling unmet needs and improving student outcomes) and satisfaction with use.</p> <p>DI-4B.1: District policy specifies that schools will administer and annual climate survey and states the procedures for its administration, analysis, action steps, and reporting.</p> <p>DI-4B.2: District School Leadership Team annually compiles a consolidated report of results from individual school reports about the climate survey and presents it to the board with recommendations for districtwide changes in policy and practice.</p> <p>DI-4B.3: District provides professional learning opportunities for school personnel on interpreting results of the annual climate survey, using it with stakeholder groups, and taking concrete action on the results.</p>	<p>of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.</p> <p>Sc-3C.3: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.</p> <p>Sc-4A.5: School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.</p> <p>Sc-4B.1: School Leadership Team annually conducts a survey of teachers and staff, families, students, and community to gauge perceptions about the school, its effectiveness, and their place in it.</p> <p>Sc-4B.2: School Leadership Team annually releases to the school community a report of its analysis of survey results, including concrete actions it plans in response to the analysis.</p> <p>Sc-4B.3: School Leadership Team annually convenes meetings of teachers and staff, students, student families, and</p>	<p>environment conducive to learning.</p>	<p>instructional time in all classrooms.</p> <p>4.2 School staff create and implement schoolwide operational procedures that minimize disruptions to instructional time.</p>
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			community members to review and discuss the report of its analysis of survey results.		
Provide supports for schools, communities, and families that are responsive to the needs of children who have experienced serious hardships in their lives	<p>DL-3C.2: District works with community groups to annually update its menu of community and social services, which includes the district's regional, and the protocol for its use.</p> <p>DL-3C.3: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching of school personnel to use the menu of community and social services.</p>	<p>Sc-3C.2: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.</p> <p>Sc-3C.3: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.</p>	Domain 4.0 – There is evidence that school culture and climate provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning.		
Increase health- and safety-focused partnerships between schools and their communities	<p>DL-3C.2: District works with community groups to annually update its menu of community and social services, which includes the district's regional, and the protocol for its use.</p> <p>DL-3C.3: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching of school personnel to use the menu of community and social services.</p>	<p>Sc-3C.2: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.</p> <p>Sc-3C.3: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as</p>	Domain 4.0 – There is evidence that school culture and climate provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning.	4.9 The school keeps physical facilities safe and orderly.	

Increase access to nursing and counseling services	<p>DL-3C.2: District works with community groups to annually update its menu of community and social services, which includes services that are accessible in the district's regional, and the protocol for its use.</p> <p>DL-3C.3: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching of school personnel to use the menu of community and social services.</p>	<p>appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.</p> <p>Sc-3C.2: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.</p> <p>Sc-3C.3: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) use data (e.g., stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of the early identification process as well as appropriate internal and external supports provided to identified students.</p>				
Increase awareness of, and provide supports for, the mental and physical health needs of children in our schools	<p>DL-3C.1: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching to school personnel on the district adopted early warning data system and related protocol.</p>	<p>Sc-3C.1: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet monthly to use an Early Warning Data System or another early identification process to identify specific students in need of support, remove barriers, and fulfill unmet needs of identified students.</p>				
Provide and encourage training for schools on best practices to improve school climate	<p>DL-3C.3: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching of school personnel to use the menu of community and social services.</p>	<p>Sc-4A.4: School promotes, recognizes, and celebrates growth and success in school rituals and routines, such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and</p>	<p>Domain 4.0 – There is evidence that school culture and climate provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning.</p>			

		<p>DL-4A.3: District expects each school to nurture a culture that recognizes and celebrates academic achievement by including the expectation in position descriptions and evaluation criteria for school personnel.</p>	<p>classroom wall displays, and student competitions.</p> <p>Sc-4A.5: School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school leaders, teachers, staff, students, students' families, and community members to work together to advance student learning.</p>		
Provide supports for all public schools to keep students and staff members safe	<p>DL-3C.2: District works with community groups to annually update its menu of community and social services, which includes services that are accessible in the district's regional, and the protocol for its use.</p> <p>DL-3C.3: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching of school personnel to use the menu of community and social services.</p>			<p>Domain 4.0 – There is evidence that school culture and climate provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning.</p>	<p>4.3 School staff communicate school-wide behavior expectations that are understood and achieved by students, and staff provide positive behavioral supports.</p>
Increase and promote partnerships between schools and community and tribal nursing/health and counseling services		<p>Sc-3C.2: School teams (e.g., grade level teams, vertical teams, subject area teams, PLCs) meet periodically with representatives of community organizations and match students with appropriate supports to fulfill their unmet needs.</p>			
Increase and support partnerships between schools and law enforcement agencies				<p>Domain 4.0 – There is evidence that school culture and climate provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning.</p>	<p>4.4 School staff consistently implement a school-wide attendance policy.</p>

Appendix C. Successful School Improvement Cycle Timeline

First Year – Planning

FALL – Sept, Oct, Nov	WINTER – Dec, Jan, Feb	SPRING – Mar, Apr, May	SUMMER – Jun, Jul, Aug
Identify School and Community Leadership Team	Part 1 LOOKING WITHIN Profile, and Practice, and Program Reviews	School plan is developed based on situational analysis (before May) School budgets finalized based on plan (May)	School plans submitted to SEA (by June 20) SEA reviews and approves plans (by July 1)

Year 1 Plan Implementation

FALL – Sept, Oct, Nov	WINTER – Dec, Jan, Feb	SPRING – Mar, Apr, May	SUMMER – Jun, Jul, Aug
Plan implementation and progress monitoring	Plan implementation and progress monitoring 2nd Quarter reporting, reflecting, and adjusting, and external sharing	Plan implementation and progress monitoring 3rd Quarter reporting, reflecting, and adjusting, and external sharing	Annual progress report, plan adjustments, and budget submitted to LEA SEA reviews and approves budget and plan adjustments

Year 2 Plan Implementation

FALL – Sept, Oct, Nov	WINTER – Dec, Jan, Feb	SPRING – Mar, Apr, May	SUMMER – Jun, Jul, Aug
Plan implementation and progress monitoring	Plan implementation and progress monitoring 2nd Quarter reporting, reflecting, and adjusting, and external sharing	Plan implementation and progress monitoring 3rd Quarter reporting, reflecting, and adjusting, and external sharing	Annual progress report, plan adjustments, and budget submitted to LEA SEA reviews and approves budget and plan adjustments

Year 3 Plan Implementation and Develop Plan for Next Three Year Cycle

FALL – Sept, Oct, Nov	WINTER – Dec, Jan, Feb	SPRING – Mar, Apr, May	SUMMER – Jun, Jul, Aug
Plan implementation and progress monitoring	Plan implementation and progress monitoring 2nd Quarter reporting, reflecting, and adjusting, and external sharing	Plan implementation and progress monitoring 3rd Quarter reporting, reflecting, and adjusting, and external sharing	Annual progress report, plan adjustments, and budget submitted to LEA SEA reviews and approves budget and plan adjustments
	Part 1 LOOKING WITHIN Profile, and Practice, and Program Reviews	School plan is developed based on situational analysis (before May) School budgets finalized based on plan (May)	School plans submitted to SEA (by June 20) SEA reviews and approves plans (by July 1)

Appendix D: Roles and Responsibilities in Supporting Successful School Improvement

The State

Education is a State and local responsibility in the United States. A State Department of Education (SEA) oversees both federal and state programs ensuring districts and schools comply with specific federal and state regulations. SEAs are expected to

- set policy and develop processes for LEAs to apply for and use federal funds for continuous improvement,
- review and approve LEA applications for funds and award subgrants to LEAs,
- monitor LEA programs and use of funds, and
- provide technical assistance to assist LEAs as they apply for, use, and report on the use of funds¹⁸.

The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2105 (ESSA) gives SEAs new flexibility in setting policies, creating processes, and providing technical assistance to LEAs so they have the capacity to support schools, especially those lowest-performing schools, in continuous improvement. For example, SEAs can take steps to strengthen the quality of local programs funded through ESSA. In this way, the SEA focuses on both compliance AND results to improve student outcomes throughout the state.

Alaska's Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) has a strong commitment to continuous improvement, so students receive the highest quality instruction and services to ensure their success in school and beyond. DEED focuses its leadership, resources, and assistance on providing equitable, high-quality educational opportunities and ongoing improvement of student outcomes through support for educators, school leaders, and students. All DEED staff play a critical role in supporting districts and schools in continuous improvement so all students can succeed and be prepared to pursue their aspirations beyond high school.

The Division of Innovation and Education Excellence (IEE) leads the charge in carrying out DEED's role related to ESSA, providing processes, resources, and supports to assist LEAs and schools to improve student outcomes. Through the Division's work, DEED

- Builds systemic capacity for improvement,
- Provides differentiated assistance to build local capacity for improvement, and
- Intervenes to correct persistent low district and school performance.

IEE, in collaboration with others within DEED, created the *Empowerment for Successful School Improvement* process to support schools and districts in improving and

¹⁸ Council of Chief State School Officers (2017). The Role of the State in the Local Implementation of ESSA Programs.

sustaining equitable, high-quality education for students throughout Alaska. The process aligns and supports the overall goals of Alaska's Education Challenge while also meeting federal and state requirements related to improving identified low-performing schools.

Specific to the *Empowerment for Successful School Improvement* process, DEED's responsibilities focus on four areas:

- ESSA designation,
- improvement plan development, review, and approval,
- monitoring, and
- reporting.

ESSA Designation

DEED provides annual ESSA designations to all schools based on an index score as detailed in Alaska's State ESSA Plan.

Improvement Plan Development, Review, and Approval

DEED is responsible for creating and implementing a continuous school improvement process which is known as Empowerment for Successful School Improvement Process. Specific tasks include

- Provide an annual overview of ESSA for districts
- Provide annual training on DEED's Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process
- Provide a web-based grants management system (GMS) where districts and schools can easily manage their Successful School Improvement Plans, related documents, and budget with funding sources
- Provide resources to assist LEAs and schools in completing the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process including
 - A guide to the state's continuous improvement process, the *Alaska's Empowerment Playbook: A Hands-On Guide to Successful School Improvement*
 - A website to access information and materials related to the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process
 - Access to videos on specific topics related to completing the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process
 - Alaska's Reading Playbook which provides clear, step-by-step examples of evidence-based instructional practices for teaching reading.
- Continuous review and revision of all resources to ensure they are current and accurate
- Provide timely notification of any changes or updates to the continuous improvement process and materials
- Provide support to districts and schools in continuous improvement including
 - FAQs

- Information on grant management and allowable use of funds
 - Email and phone support as needed or requested
- Provide additional supports to schools with an ESSA designation as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement - Lowest 5% (CSI 5%) through Empowerment Specialists who provide personalized guidance to build the capacities of the district and school leaders as well as teachers, staff, and the larger community.
- Design a common rubric for reviewing and approving Successful School Improvement Plans
- Review and approve Successful School Improvement Plans using a common rubric
- Provide recommendations and assistance to districts whose plans are not approved
- Oversee and build capacity of the Empowerment Specialists by
 - Providing annual training to current and new Empowerment Specialists on the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process and their role and responsibilities
 - Providing ongoing professional learning, as needed, based on Empowerment Specialists' needs
 - Providing monthly coaching
 - Conducting routine meetings with the Empowerment Specialists
 - Reviewing Empowerment Specialists reports and providing any needed clarifications, suggestions, or recommendations based on report data

Monitoring

For those districts and schools with an ESSA designation of CSI 5%, monitoring responsibilities fall with the requirements of the ESEA Monitoring Report which include

- Desk monitoring of districts according to the ESEA monitoring schedule
- Review of Successful School Improvement Plans and progress
- Annual review of updates of Successful School Improvement Plans and related budget

Reporting

IEE is also responsible for evaluating the implementation of the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process and its impact on improving district and school performance. Specific tasks include

- Design an evaluation plan with specific measures and targets for the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process,
- Annually collect progress data and use data to change process, materials, and supports, as needed,

- At the end of each Successful School Improvement 3-year cycle, collect and analyze evaluation data, and make recommendations based on the data,
- Monthly report to DEED leadership,
- Quarterly report to the State Board, and
- Ad hoc reporting as needed or requested.

The Empowerment Specialists

The Empowerment Specialists play a critical role in the support and success of CSI %5 schools. The primary function of the Empowerment Specialist is to provide personalized guidance to build the capacities of the district and school leaders as well as teachers, staff, and the larger community, because when the adult practices of those closest to students are strengthened, so are student outcomes. Their responsibilities include

- Facilitate and support schools in completing the Successful School Improvement 3-year cycle
- Develop strong, positive relationships with the team, leadership, and communities
- Provide leadership in developing measurable and intentional goals tied to academic achievement and the goals of the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process
- Support the needs of the community assigned, through the development and implementation of evidence-based reading and literacy programs with the goal of all students reading at grade level by the end of grade 3
- Support school leadership teams in building standard operating procedures to support rigorous, high-quality, and evidence-based instruction
- Understand the local culture of the school community and support building a culture of learning through school improvement
- Participate in training sessions and professional learning as requested by DEED and or the schools they support. This may include but not limited to:
 - RTI/MTSS Conference
 - Alaska's School Leadership Institute
 - Alaska's Science of Reading Symposium
 - Meetings with the DEED School Recognition and Support Team
 - Team meetings
 - Regional meetings
- Document hours, topics, and categories of service for legislative and board reporting
- Document all processes and data related to the project for research and development
- Submit updates on progress related to Successful School Improvement Plans
- Collaborate to share Successful School Improvement successes and resources

The District

The District is the primary driver of its own improvement as well as the improvement of its schools. Districts partner with DEED in identifying and providing support to address low-performing schools. Together DEED and each district work side-by-side to build local school capacity for improvement which calls for

- Operational effectiveness in carrying out central office functions,
- Strong infrastructure for school leadership, instruction, and learning, and
- Specific differentiated supports matched to identified school needs.

District responsibilities include

- Supporting the school in partnering with tribal leaders, student families, and the community at large in developing and implementing a 3-year school improvement plan
- Supporting engagement at all levels from the district office and administration, tribal leaders, the community, the school and administration, the classroom teachers, school staff, students, and their families in the continuous improvement of its lowest performing schools
- Providing a District Liaison to support the school throughout the Successful School Improvement 3-year cycle
- Providing release time for principal and leadership team members for required trainings
- Reviewing and approving the school's 3-year improvement plan
- Submitting a district wide budget annually for the 1003a grants and quarterly reimbursement requests
- Participating in annual performance and budget reviews
- Participating in ESEA Monitoring as scheduled by the ESEA monitoring team and provide DEED with documentation from designated schools that there has been community outreach and stakeholder involvement in the development of school improvement plans

District Liaison

The District identifies a district liaison to work with assigned DEED staff to provide guidance to schools in developing their Successful School Improvement Plan and implementing the Successful School Improvement 3-yr cycle. District Liaison responsibilities include

- Facilitating a close working relationship between the district and DEED staff to support the school and community in their continuous improvement efforts
- Supporting the school in partnering with tribal leaders, families, and the community in developing a leadership team for school improvement
- Supporting engagement at all levels from the district office and administration, tribal leaders, the community, the school and administration, the classroom teachers, school staff, students, and their families

- Assisting schools in accessing and interpreting school and student performance data
- Actively participating in problem solving and leveraging district supports with the Empowerment Specialist and the School and Community Leadership Team with ongoing, regularly scheduled communication, in developing a 3-year school improvement plan
- Participating in training sessions, professional learning, and meetings related to the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement process
- Reporting progress to District leadership

The School

The school has the primary responsibility of improvement to ensure each student receives the highest quality instruction and services, so they are prepared to move on to the next level of learning in pursuit of their interests and aspirations. The school works hand-in-hand with its district in reflecting on its performance, analyzing school and student performance data, and developing solutions for barriers or challenges to improvement.

School administrators lead the improvement charge, engaging staff, families, and communities in the education of all students it serves. They are responsible for following the Empowerment for Successful School Improvement Process and completing the Successful School Improvement 3-year Cycle. Specific tasks include

- Forming a School and Community Leadership Team
- Coordinating and supporting staff participation in the School and Community Leadership Team
- Attending and actively engaging in all Empowerment process meetings and trainings
- Creating and implementing a 3-year Successful School Improvement Plan
- Presenting their Successful School Improvement Plan to their School Board
- Submitting their Successful School Improvement Plan to the district for approval
- If the Plan is not approved, making any recommended changes and resubmitting the plan to the district for approval
- Collecting and reporting implementation and results data
- Working collaboratively with the district liaison and state empowerment specialist to complete 3-year Successful School Improvement cycle
- Participating in networking opportunities to share project process and results with other schools and districts